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Edited by NORMAN HAIRE, Ch.M., M.B.

SEXUAL FREEDOM

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SEX LIFE AND SEX ETHICS



# SEXUAL FREEDOM

*by*

RENÉ GUYON

*translated from the French by*

EDEN *and* CEDAR PAUL

*with an introduction by*

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## INTRODUCTION

THIS is the second volume of Monsieur René Guyon's studies in Sexual Ethics, the first of which, entitled in French *La Légitimité des Actes Sexuels*, was published in this series under the title of *Sex Life and Sex Ethics* in 1933.

In 1932, when the present volume was written, the future of Sexual Reform seemed exceedingly rosy. On all sides and among all sorts of people, old taboos seemed to be breaking down, and outworn conventions to be in the process of being discarded. In almost all countries all over the world, groups of liberally-minded people had joined together to form societies for the study of sexual problems, and often for the reform of the legal or social attitude towards many of these problems. Everywhere there was evidence that all kinds of people, even apparently the most conservative, were at last recognising the dangers of sexual ignorance, and the wide-spread misery and unhappiness arising from it. Even religionists, of almost all sects, were acknowledging the need of systematic sexual education.

In many countries, sexual advisory bureaux had been set up. Birth-control centres, to which poor women could go for free medical advice as to how to prevent pregnancy so as to limit the number of their children in accordance with their health and their financial resources, were multiplying rapidly. The old laws dealing savagely with sexual delinquencies were being interpreted less cruelly, and, in some countries, for instance in Germany, which was indeed a pattern to the world in sexual enlightenment, new laws had been drafted to replace the old ones—new laws in which sexual freedom for the individual was to be permitted so far as it did not interfere with the rights of other individuals, or with the welfare of the State.

To-day, only six years later, our high hopes have been

rudely dashed. In Germany the change has been most striking. There, birth control-centres and sexual advisory bureaux have been closed and forbidden. Soon after the coming of the Nazis to power, the world-famous Institute of Sexual Science, founded and led by Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld, was invaded and wrecked by a set of Nazi hooligans. The priceless and irreplaceable collections of books and pictures and other objects of sexological interest which filled the library and museum of the Institute, were deliberately torn up or broken or otherwise ruined, and many of them were ceremoniously destroyed at the infamous "Burning of the Books" which took place in May 1933, to the accompaniment of defamatory and abusive speeches about their authors—who included not only world-famous psychologists and sexologists like Freud, Hirschfeld himself, and Havelock Ellis; not only moderate liberals like Margaret Sanger and the writer of this Introduction; but even scientists and poets like Krafft-Ebing, Kisch, Bloch, Forel, and Walt Whitman, who had long since passed away.

The action which started in Germany has spread. A new wave of puritanism has swept across other European countries. Even in Russia, where the campaign against religious superstition seemed to have removed all obstacles to sexual rationalism, there has been a strong reaction. The legal permission for interruption of pregnancy, at the mother's wish, during the first three months, has been rescinded; and sexual aberrations, which, provided they involved only adults and were satisfied in private, had been regarded as personal matters, not prejudicial, and therefore of no interest, to the State, have again been declared illegal and are indeed punished more severely than under the Czarist regime.

Neither in Germany nor in Russia have the changes arisen on purely "moral" grounds. In all totalitarian states the desire for conquest or the fear of aggression drives the "leaders" of the country to take part in a race for cannon

fodder, and anything which seems likely in any way to decrease the speed at which new babies may be manufactured is regarded as against the interests of the State.

Such an attitude *must* affect the non-totalitarian states as well. Democracies, finding themselves threatened by the rapidly multiplying populations of totalitarian states, whose "leaders" scream out hysterically in the same breath that they have not sufficient territory for their present population and that they want their population to increase as fast as possible—democracies cannot regard with indifference the immediate disadvantages of a diminishing birth-rate, even though they know that, in a saner world, a less congested population would afford greater opportunities for health, wealth and happiness for the individual citizen.

And so, in the democracies, there is already visible a tendency to reaction in the sphere of sexual liberty. In this country this tendency has shown itself first in the form of censorship. Censorship of books proceeds in the old, planless, unsystematic, and unforeseeable way to which we have been accustomed for so long. It has also exhibited itself in a project to limit the advertisement of contraceptives—though there is as yet no suggestion that there should be any important limitation of their sale, at least to adults.

Perhaps the most striking example of the existence of a wave of puritanism is the abdication of King Edward VIII, a painful subject to which I shall refrain from referring in greater detail.

The World League for Sexual Reform, to which the author of this book has referred as such a hopeful sign, both in volume 1 and in the present volume, has been dissolved. Its national sections found it impossible to function further in so many countries, that it was useless to persuade ourselves that it existed any longer as an international body. The International Presidency, therefore, dissolved the League; but in some countries the national section has continued as a separate entity. For instance, in England,

the British section reformed itself and now exists as the Sex Education Society. There have been no international congresses of the League since 1932.

Science, reason, and logic, which seemed to be proceeding along a clear road, with no obstacles before them, when the present volume was written, now find themselves hampered at every step. Truth is neglected and even held in contempt, if it stands in the way of political or nationalistic aims. One cannot help wondering how far the sadistic manifestations of the totalitarian states are the result of a neurosis caused by sexual repression, and how far they are instituted and carried out by sexual neuropaths of the persecuting type.

Monsieur Guyon lives in an Oriental country where many of the sexual repressions, common in Western Europe, are unknown. Perhaps it is for this reason that he, as it seems to me, under-estimates the difficulty of adopting a rational sexual policy in practice, even if one is emancipated theoretically. The legal, social, and economic difficulties which arise from the "sanctions" applied against persons who attempt to convert their theoretical views into practical modes of living, have convinced many would-be pioneers that it is no use running their heads against the brick wall of public opinion. Even the most sexually emancipated individual cannot free himself from the herd instinct, and suffers if his too open flouting of accepted taboos arouses the active disapproval of his fellows.

A question which has not often been raised, but which would, I think, repay investigation, is how far the modern trend to city life is due to a (perhaps unconscious) flight from the prying interest in the sexual behaviour of other people, which is usual in rural communities, small villages, and even small towns on the one hand; and the comparative anonymity, and the much greater sexual freedom consequent upon this, which is the rule in large cities.

In spite of the retrograde changes which have occurred since Guyon wrote this volume, there are, of course, en-

couraging signs of progress to be seen here and there. Even in totalitarian states, the science of Eugenics has gained a new importance and a new popularity, though it is often adulterated and invalidated by so-called "racial" pseudo-science. In the democracies, particularly in the Anglo-Saxon countries, sex education is spreading; the sexual basis of marriage is being recognised; and the need for facilities for divorce when marriage is a failure, is being acknowledged. At last, judges and magistrates and police authorities are beginning to realise that sexual delinquencies can be more profitably regarded by the State as due to psychological peculiarities than to original sin, and that, in so far as they may be harmful to the community, they are more likely to be eradicated by psychological treatment than by imprisonment with hard labour.

In the democracies there are evidences of a growing recognition of the right of the individual to sexual liberty, as well as to political and religious liberty. The spread of contraceptive knowledge and the economic emancipation of women have inevitably diminished the importance, and the market value, of female virginity, and increasing numbers of women are demanding, and seeing that they obtain, the measure of sexual freedom that has never been denied to the male.

Demands for facilities for sterilisation and abortion—sometimes extremist demands—are becoming more vocal; and even moderately conservative groups are admitting that accepted attitudes towards these questions must be reconsidered and modified, so as to be brought into greater harmony with changed and changing social conditions.

Above all, there is evident a growing enlightenment about sex, and a spirit of readiness to discuss sexual problems with some degree of reasonableness. As a result of this, one sees encouraging signs of a greater tolerance of people whose sexual tastes and sexual activities are not necessarily identical with our own.

Doctors, school teachers, and even clergymen, to say nothing of many laymen, are taking the trouble to learn something about sexology, and are even (not always with unmixed wisdom) setting up as self-appointed and self-approved "experts" and advisers on sexual problems. Whatever disadvantages are entailed, this at least shows an increasing recognition of the importance of *understanding* sexual behaviour instead of merely condemning it out of hand.

If then, we cannot, at the moment the book is published in England, be as sanguine about the rapid progress of sexual freedom as was Monsieur Guyon when he wrote it six years ago, at least we may feel that the outlook is not too hopeless. Progress may not be as rapid as he believed; but we feel that, in the long run, sexual liberty, like political liberty, is bound to triumph.

NORMAN HAIRE

127, HARLEY STREET, LONDON W.1

*January 1939*



## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THE first volume of my *Studies of Sexual Ethics* was devoted to the consideration of the legitimacy of sexual acts. This second volume adds, as an essential corollary, an account of the principles of sexual freedom. The two taken together form what, in the following pages, I shall frequently term "the doctrine of sexual legitimacy and sexual freedom."

The statement and the principles of this doctrine should help us to reform the chaotic and disastrous system which, at the present time in the sexual sphere, is so pernicious for mankind, especially in the West. That reform will be the main topic of the subsequent volumes. But even now, for anyone who wishes or has determined to free himself from the hideous bondage of conventional "sexual morality", the doctrine offers sufficient guidance towards this liberation, so that we can achieve for ourselves and help others to achieve a better life and a life more in harmony with healthy nature. One who has been thus enfranchised will never cease to recognise the advantages. We are therefore glad to think that the doctrine which has been born under the sign of integral rationalism has such good chances of successful expansion.

In twentieth century society, opinions on sexual ethics are changing with lightning speed. A few years are enough to familiarise the public with some thesis of which it knew nothing, or by which (worse still) it was profoundly shocked. Questions which used to be sedulously stifled in dark corners, now find healthy discussion in the light of day and enjoy the accuracy of definition which light alone can bring. Everywhere the old edifice of sexual taboos is cracking. Everywhere those for whom it has so long served as a shelter are making ready to move in haste, fearing lest the sun's

radiance may find its way into the crevices where they vegetate in the dark.

In the preface to the former volume I insisted upon the generality of this movement, and the matter needs no further discussion. Here, that the balance-sheet of active sexual reform may be brought up to date, I wish to refer, with due homage, to the work that has been done by persons who have not hesitated to devote to it all their time and all their means. More particularly I must mention the bold and persevering efforts of the World League for Sexual Reform upon a Scientific Basis which had only just been founded by Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld when the first volume of these Studies was published.<sup>1</sup> The whole history of Sexual Reform, which nothing can now stop, is illustrated by these efforts. By 1932, the League had already held five great international congresses which were attended by experts from the chief countries in the world.<sup>2</sup> A French section has been formed, and we may hope that it will crown the valiant, systematic, and persevering attempts which Victor Margueritte has been making for years to draw the attention of the public at large to the disastrous consequences of the dominant sexual policy.

These persistent and practical labours on behalf of sexual emancipation should not be unknown to my readers at the time when I am making my own modest contribution in this new book.

RENÉ GUYON

<sup>1</sup> Presidents: Prof. Magnus Hirschfeld, Dr. Norman Haire, Dr. Leunbach.

<sup>2</sup> Congress in Berlin, 1927; Copenhagen, 1928; London, 1929; Vienna, 1930; Brno, 1932.

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# SEXUAL FREEDOM



## CHAPTER I

### NEED FOR AND FOUNDATION OF SEXUAL FREEDOM

Modern Societies and the Principle that Sexual Acts are Illegitimate.—Social Results of Sexual Neurosis: the Persecuted Type.—The Persecuting Type.—Martyrology of the Sexual Life.—Social Bankruptcy of Systems of Sexual Taboo.—Social Confusion caused by "Sexual Morality".—Theory of Sublimation and Criticism thereof.—First Inference: The Individual and Social Results of Sexual Neuroses call for the Suppression of Anti-sexual Taboos.—Second Inference: The Legitimacy of Sexual Acts implies Sexual Freedom.—Philosophical Foundation of Sexual Freedom upon Freedom of Conscience.

*Modern Societies and the Principle that Sexual Acts are Illegitimate.*—In modern social groups, and more especially among those of the West, sexual acts are, on principle, deemed illegitimate, if not illegal, when they do not conform to certain prescriptions severely set forth by the law or when they fail to accept a form of sexual morality which more often than not has its roots in some religious formula. In the first volume of this series, entitled *Sex Life and Sex Ethics*, I discussed the origins of such hostility and how it was a direct outcome of ancestral taboos which even in our day crop up to disconcert us. The subject can be dismissed here. But the reader would do well to glance at my conclusions which were as follows: sexual acts are legitimate if they are performed under the aegis of science, reason, and logic; the theory that such acts are illegitimate must be denounced since it is contrary to science, reason, and logic. It will, of course, be along similar lines that from start to finish of the present volume we shall continue our enquiry into sexual ethics. Nevertheless, before asking whether sexual freedom is the logical outcome of the principle of legitimacy,

it will be useful to enquire how far the contrary principle (that of illegitimacy) has been responsible for the formation of social groups filled with agitation, anxiety, and unhappiness. Are not such groups what they are because of the incoherent, illogical, and arbitrary way in which sexual ethics and organisation are therein governed? And are not all these ills the outcome of false premises? The answer is not far to seek, but it is well we should pause for a moment to consider it. A better understanding will thus be secured, showing the advantages to be gained by substituting one for the other, by introducing a free sexual order as corollary to the principle of legitimacy.

*Social Results of Sexual Neurosis: the Persecuted Type.*—Freudian psychology has shown the frequency with which neuroses prove to be of sexual origin. The remedy proposed for the cure of such neuroses is, we are told, psychoanalysis. Explanations and examples were given in *Sex Life and Sex Ethics* (Chapter IX). Here we have to demonstrate in more detail what may be the toll exacted from the community by individual neuroses. The need for exercising the sex function towards its specific ends begins to make itself felt in earliest childhood and lasts well on into old age, before and after there is any possibility of reproduction. This need is so natural, so clamorous, and at the same time so legitimate, that we cannot fail to note how neuroses which are the outcome of the censorship, repression, and prohibition entail serious harm to the bodily and mental stability of the individual. The harm varies, I grant, according to personal constitution; but it is always present and its effects are often disastrous. Now we cannot afford to turn a blind eye on these effects, since the activities of Mr Everyman have a constant repercussion upon social activities in general.

(a) Sexual neuropaths lose contact with the natural, normal life. The reason for this is obvious. Have we not seen that the neuropath is engaged in unceasing warfare



with nature and with physiological laws? Such continuous struggle renders him either sad or irritable, either reserved or muddle-headed, according to the sufferer's temperament. His actions are mainly determined by hidden sexual thoughts. At one time he will ruthlessly avoid any action at all, considering every kind of sexual indulgence tainted and impermissible. In other seasons he will be irritated by the anti-sexual conventions which make him wretched, vaguely suspecting that they are irrational and false. But he is too crushed by repression to endeavour to free himself by acquiring a clearer outlook upon these contradictory theories, and by himself achieving a logical and wholesome reclassification of ethical values where sex is concerned.

The neuropath thus acquires bad habits, and he displays strange attitudes of mind. Life becomes less and less natural and manifests extraordinary complications. Freud cites the case of a girl who could not get into bed without first going through an elaborate ritual. She placed her pillow (woman) in such a manner as to avoid its touching the wood of the bed (man); then, taking a little down cushion, she would lay it upon the pillow lozenge wise—the lozenge symbolizing the female genitalia. A sexual neuropath is a creature haunted by symbols which refer to the forbidden acts he would fain perform.

(b) Prohibitions lie at the root of neuroses and furnish the rough compost for their cultivation. Is a regime of prohibitions capable of securing health for those upon whom it is imposed, and can it prolong life? Often we find that matters take quite another turn. In *Sex Life and Sex Ethics* we drew the reader's attention to the "Anglo-Saxon neurosis," which is rampant in the U.S.A. (See pp. 228 and foll. in that work.)

This does not call for surprise. People who obstinately refuse to live any other than an artificial life, a life in conflict with the needs of nature, a life wherein they are

condemned for ever to put their own noses out of joint, have no cause for complaint if such a tortured existence is cut short. Modern medical men tell us not to worry and to avoid fussy activities since worry and fussiness serve only to hasten the oncoming of old age. Repressions injure and unhinge the nervous system; they therefore tend to shorten life.

It is not uncommon for moralists of the anti-sexual kind to be splenetic, easily excitable, nervy, suspicious, hating their fellow men—moods and conditions which make good health and long life difficult of attainment. They are their own victims taken in their own snares. Having defied nature, they live without her—and Dame Nature spurns them. As a striking example of the consequences such fanatical anti-rationalism may entail, I shall cite the death of the U.S. politician Bryan, that great prohibitionist before the Lord. He died suddenly in the course of a lawsuit against a schoolmaster who had ventured to teach the theory of evolution to his class and had not kept within the biblical explanations. By a singular turn of fortune we may thus see other prohibitionists fall victim to what the folk describe as an “attack o’ the bile” which has been accumulating in them against joy and freedom, and which would appear on a given day to choke them. This should prove instructive to those who act as defenders of universal toleration, whose convictions suffice to make their lives serene and happy.

(c) Even when a neuropath escapes definite illness, he succeeds in making both himself and those with whom he comes into contact extremely miserable. This is apt to happen in any neurotic disorder, but in the case of a confirmed neuropath it is an unceasing trouble and the effect is more widespread and more profound. “Some men,” writes Freud in his *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-analysis*, p. 290, “can deprive themselves of the satisfaction of the libido without harmful results; they are not happy, they suffer from

unsatisfied longing—but they do not fall ill.” A little farther on, he adds: “The measure of unsatisfied libido that the average human being can take upon himself is limited” (p. 290).

If the neurosis becomes intensified beyond a certain point, we get genuinely pathological cases with all the complications they involve. But first let us explain precisely what is meant by the term “neurosis.” In the present work I use it in a very general sense. It does not necessarily imply the existence of a diagnosable sickness running a definitely morbid course. There exist certain neuroses whose symptoms are so cleverly masked by the person affected that the observer with average talents will fail to detect that anything is amiss. Nor are these the least dangerous among the neuroses, for they are often followed by cruel awakenings which leave a permanent scar. Cases are likewise frequently encountered where the subject—Sinclair Lewis’ Babbitt, for instance—has not reached the stage of a true neurosis, since he is no more than moody, unhappy, dissatisfied with a life he fails to understand, irritated with a scheme of things which is constantly hindering him and depriving him of what he looks upon as his due; such a man will be fretful throughout life, with never a blossoming-time of the sexual instinct, never a moment when his dreams are wholly fulfilled. He plods on from day to day, sulkily doing his allotted task like a horse kept in the traces until it dies. There are, to-day, innumerable sexual malcontents; and it is the existence of this vast army of agitated and anxious persons which explains the modern unrest. Deep down they long for a moral revolution, without clearly formulating their own demands—so delicate and difficult are these by their very nature. This is the “collective neurosis” from which mankind is suffering. More especially does it afflict the populations belonging to western civilisation, for anti-sexuality has here been imposed very stringently and is responsible for innumerable evils to the individual and to

society. It would not be far from the truth to assert that everybody living in the twentieth century of our European civilisation has been, is, or will be afflicted by it.

The neurosis is even harder to bear when the subject, having previously lived a satisfactory sex life, is subsequently deprived of any possibility for gratifying his needs. He then becomes like those who, having once been wealthy and taken their ease, are now going through a period of poverty which is rendered the bitterer by memories of happy days gone by. Freud has shown how the neuropath will cling with untiring delight "to a chosen moment of the past." He adds: "The period in question was one during which his libido was not deprived of gratification, *a period during which he found happiness.*" The italics of the last clause are mine, and I wish the words to stand out because they emphasise in a formidable manner the incoherence of extant systems of sexual ethics, and show how responsible they are for the present state of affairs. Sex happiness is there for our grasping in most instances, and it would be easy to seize and secure were we governed by a sensible code in the realm of sex. But, like a man in a frenzy, we reject both a rational sex ethic and the wholesome joy which would result. For, as Freud remarks, in the cases cited "that which of old was pleasant to the individual must to-day arouse his resistance or his aversion." We have said our say, in the first volume of this series, concerning the wrong-headedness of such an inversion of values; but it cannot be too often repeated that the inversion has most disastrous repercussions in social life.

(d) It would be an error to suppose that neurosis is conquered, and replaced by a normal condition, among those mortals who have organised their existence in such a way that (sometimes on principle) chastity and the systematic abstention from all sexual enjoyment are obtained—as by priests, members of religious orders, etc. We know that such abstinence takes vengeance in agonising

struggles, in severe bodily suffering, and in other stresses peculiarly disastrous to the human nervous system. Here, too, an instructive parallel may be drawn between those who apply such a rule to themselves in order that a questionable theory may triumph, and those who, their minds put serenely to rest after a rational revision of ethical values, permit nature to run her course without restraint. But the social consequences are that the sexual asceticism which western civilisation is so fond of extolling as superior (though it seems to require a deal of prohibition and persecution to maintain it) is to-day experiencing the fate of every regime rooted in coercion, i.e. a final revolt of the sexes, like that of which Judge Lindsey is a noted exponent in the U.S.A., and which Miss Ethel Mannin in *All Experience* has more recently discussed. Miss Mannin has no hesitation in ascribing the contemporary craze for boxers to the violent desires of "the monstrous regiment of women hungry for sex," to all the women whose sex life remains unsatisfied, women who are distraught and made ill by the ridiculously ascetic fate imposed upon them by a "perfected" system of morals—for it is towards this "perfected" ethic that the contemporary world is drifting. We are here confronted by one of those profound moral blunders which may well bring about the death of a society. Indeed, if our society cannot be bettered, it would be better dead.

Chastity, as a regime accepted on principle and universally enforced, is veritably the triumph of neurosis. The mere fact of rising in revolt against the sexual impulse and the function of reproduction; the overt negation of the impulse in deference to taboos; the acceptance of so artificial a programme: all these constitute a deliberate fostering of neurosis. Those who have succeeded in escaping its trammels look upon this rule of abstinence as illogical and monstrous, because they themselves are healthy and live a wholesome life; that is to say, they live naturally. A man who should train himself to do without eating, and should

pat himself on the back for the success of his stunt, would be in much the same case. His mates would certainly try to cure him of so fantastic and so dangerous a hobby; he would be looked upon as a neuropath, less on account of his abstention from food than because he proved capable of coming to his foolish decision. Similar, indeed, is the case of the sex abstentionist. We have let our eyes be blinded by the big words used in drawing up the doctrine of continence—otherwise the flaw would have been obvious to us at the outset.

*The Persecuting Type.*—In *Sex Life and Sex Ethics* we showed how persons haunted by ideas concerning sex, sexual neuropaths in short, were peculiarly intolerant, peevish, and choleric where sex manifestations came into play. These persons belong to the persecuting type, which is the counterpart of the previously studied persecuted type. Repression and the censorship—generally supported by considerations of a religious or metaphysical character—have in these cases set up a second nature. Sexual ideas are as dominant, as absorbing, as in the persecuted type—maybe to an even higher degree, since they do not receive the satisfaction they demand. The persecutor intends to prevent others from enjoying these satisfactions just as he denies them to himself. The thought that others may be having free sex relations (even though they do not interfere with his own life) is intolerable to him. His mind is haunted by this notion. He watches couples or he follows them everywhere. By setting up private enquiries, by denunciations, by committees, by his wordy campaigns, he is constantly bringing influence to bear. When possible he will see that prohibitory laws are introduced. If his attempts prove successful, a whole series of legislative measures is inaugurated, and these laws are the reflexion of his persecution neurosis. In this connection our minds will automatically turn towards the U.S.A. There we may with truth declare that sex is rampant and is immoderately in evidence—not because

Americans are more licentious than Europeans, but because sex is a constant preoccupation of American law.

Persecution neurosis is profoundly antagonistic to any scientific approach to sex problems, and ends by creating artificial societies. Such societies prove most unhappy, or else they are hypocritical. Pushed to the extreme, they easily produce morbid manifestations. In such cases, prohibition mania, transgressing its own frontiers, may culminate in sexual excesses. The subject is always on the look out for, and if necessary incites others to, sexual activities, even of the most abnormal kind, so as to have an excuse for censoring them: while in reality he derives gratification from contemplating them—or performing them. (“Jack the Ripper” was probably a purity-fanatic run mad.) Ceaselessly he covers himself with reproach, under pretext of turning away from these activities. He satisfies his morbid preoccupation with sex affairs by gloating over them with a view to inflicting a reprimand—which is entirely spurious. We know how artificial a thing is repression, and cannot fail to be struck by its essential weakness; and we realise that persecution mania is one of the most striking expressions of neurosis.

Here is a characteristic example, culled from the English press. A tall individual, wearing a black skirt, white shoes and stockings, a red hat and a veil, was wont to appear at nightfall, frightening girls and children in the streets of certain villages. A year went by, and still the masquerader remained at large. One evening the offender was caught. When unmasked, he proved to be a clergyman who at first refused to give any explanation. Next day, however (night having brought counsel), he called the townsfolk together, and declared at the meeting that he had wished to put the morals of his fellow-citizens to the test, and to see for himself what might be their attitude towards women. He did not consider he had done anything wrong. Indeed, he was proud to say that the men of England had proved wonder-

fully chivalrous. He closed his harangue on the note of commendation to the English and apologies for his own folly.

The most important word in this clever and strange defence is the last. For once in a while the neuropath makes use of a term perfectly applicable to himself. This case is characteristic of many others. The man is obsessed by sex, he seeks contact (by night and alone) with persons of the opposite sex, he is a "transvestist" (i.e. he likes to wear female attire), the fear he arouses satisfies his sadistic tendency, he supports his line of conduct by declaring it to be favourable to anti-sexual morals, he is fired by religious proselytism, he justifies his acts by appealing to the omnipotence of taboos, he has the arrogant belief that he possesses the right to intervene in the activities of others, and so on. Nor need we ask ourselves whether the clergyman was sincere or hypocritical, for that would be a false manner of approach. He is the victim of repression, an unhappy shuttlecock flying backwards and forwards between nature and a mass of illogical taboos, rendered incapable (by his submission to other taboos of a metaphysical order) of grappling with himself or of understanding the simplest principle underlying the problems of sex, with which his mind has wrestled to the verge of collapse. Yes, our clergyman was not far out when he spoke of his adventure as "folly," for such attacks of folly furnish a key to the neuroses which manifest themselves in the sufferings of the persecuted and in the mania of the persecutors.

A neuropath of a similar type of anti-sex persecutor is that Duc de la Meilleraye who, in the reign of Louis XIV, set about mutilating the statues in the Palais Mazarin. These works were, according to him, indecent. Further he was bothered as to whether he ought not to have his daughters' front teeth extracted "because they are too beautiful"; he likewise forbade women and girls to milk the cows on his estates, for "they must be dreserved from



the bad thoughts such an occupation might give rise to." Meilleraye ended his days as a lunatic, believing himself to be a tulip.

A similar case was that of the priest who collected a crowd on one of the boulevards by pulling down and tearing up posters he alleged to be indecent.

At times such manias assume epidemic form. On these occasions the persecuting neuropaths form themselves into groups or associations and become extremely active. They have a sovereign disregard for personal freedom, and for the privacy of their victims' lives. A campaign rages against what is called "impropriety" of dress, and whenever possible the hand of the legislature is forced. At Genoa in 1929 there existed groups of young fascists whose mission it was to hunt down girls and to soil with charcoal the silk stockings of those whose skirts were considered too short. There was also a committee in Italy charged with seeing to it that women's clothing should not be transparent or diaphanous, not too short or too clinging, that the skirts of little girls should reach the knee at least, and that flesh-coloured stockings should never be worn (1929). Another form of "cleansing" activity was that performed by the Catholic Association of Chioggia whose members took an oath binding themselves never to associate with women whose dress offended their own false modesty ("these scandalous pagan fashions," and "revoltingly immodest" costumes), and never to buy anything in the stores where unseemly garments lay exposed upon the counters and in the display windows, and so on. Here we reach a point where anti-sexual prohibitory fervour joins forces with religious taboos. Moreover we know full well what was at the root of the whole campaign. It is a repetition of an old-time policy which found its fullest expression in Puritanism.

In an epoch of high tension in the political field, these zealots dread lest they should show themselves less perfervid than their fellow-citizens. But turbulent as such

modern Polyeuctes may be, we are entitled to ask whether they are all equally and sincerely horrified by the female attire they criticise. I have spectral doubts. Their actions are largely unconscious, due to mass suggestion, and full of the imitative trend. Further, the longing to be constantly dealing with sex affairs, to be busied with the sexual life of others under the guise of censor, to be able to touch and to arrest members of the opposite sex with the connivance of legal authority (an added advantage)—such determinants bring great contentment to the hearts of sex persecutors. This is a very interesting type of sexual obsession. Those who suffer from it show a persecuting spirit which is no more than a hair's breadth removed from voluptuousness. This is why in such cases there occurs so violent a change of front during periods of revolutionary upheaval, the sometime persecutors of sex profiting by the favour of the moment to let themselves go in an orgy of debauch. Their kind of activity has not changed; it is the results of their activity which have undergone metamorphosis.

*Martyrology of the Sexual Life.*—Sexual neuroses manifest themselves in two different ways, and both ways are heavy with consequence where social communities are concerned.

In one type, repression and the censorship play a dominant role; the neuropath submits to them without discussion, looking upon them as an essential part of his fate; though suffering from their presence, he does not dispute their right of asylum, seeing in this nothing but a natural phenomenon which it is his duty to accept; he has been taught to regard it as a normal taboo such as must necessarily be respected; it may break him, scare him, kill him, but it does not disgust him.

In other cases, however, the taboo is discussed, denied, cast aside; there ensues a partial or total liberation from its dominion; the very principle of its existence is questioned, and denounced on account of the tortures it inflicts; it is discredited; life knits itself up again without the taboo,

and is reorganised upon logical, rational, and scientific principles.

We might fancy that minds thus freed would escape neurosis, and this is the result in a certain number of cases, when the will is strong and circumstances prove favourable enough to permit of the theoretical liberation crystallising into suitable practice. Unfortunately this seldom happens. The social organism is powerfully dominated by the taboo, and for the larger part of the time sexual freedom is an empty shibboleth. A strong head is needed if a man is to impose his own concept of sexual activity upon a refractory world. Up to a comparatively advanced age, the individual (being treated as a minor) is subject to those who thwart his will, impose their own, make it their business to prevent their victim's sexual freedom and often to force on him actions quite contrary to his own preference in the matter. Even when delivered from every kind of wardship, the person who thinks he has freed himself will find he has made a mistake, at any rate in western lands, for he will discover that he is faced by a society organised to secure the supremacy of the taboo. His actions will clash with an arsenal of laws, of customs minutely catalogued, and so drawn up that any voluntary exercise of sexual activity even with consenting parties is often rendered difficult or dangerous if not impossible of accomplishment.

The upshot is that the neurosis plays havoc in many instances even with the liberated mind. True, those who have thrown off the shackles are no longer a prey to their own inhibitions since they have come to enjoy normal views; but they find themselves in conflict with forces which render an application of the new principles to themselves a hopeless task. They waste their energies in inconclusive revolts—though thereby they merely succeed in aggravating the evil.

The register of sexual martyrs is a long one under modern social conditions, more especially in the West. Included in

its columns are all those sad-eyed children, who are morose and irritable, whose characters are warped, and whom psychoanalysis and recent study have shown to possess an intensive sexual development, but whose ardent aspirations are misinterpreted or are violated; all those bloodless and timid grown-ups who remain in tutelage, and, though physically mature, have for years to submit to other wills than their own in matters where sex is concerned; all those slaves of their environment who have not the courage to shake off family ties and into whose privacies it is considered perfectly good form to pry; all splenetic and continent unmarried folk; all the married whose lives fail to harmonise, whose love has died, the wives dissatisfied and misunderstood, the husbands unbearable, horrible, dragging the interminable chains of wedlock and exacerbated neurosis; all those eager to escape the surroundings wherein they suffocate, but overwhelmed by querulous anxiety, in search of they know not what, and only able to purchase freedom at the price of catastrophe.

A formidable list of martyrs! Who will ever be able to count them, especially those of a past era during which the tyranny exercised by the father, the caste, the religious creed, nipped the buds of liberty more pitilessly, more uncompromisingly, than even to-day? Who shall ever know how many tears have been shed, how great was the despair, how frequent and bruising the resignation, how numerous the revolts, that were crushed, the fights that came to nothing, the lacerations of the spirit, the follies perpetrated by these martyrs to the sexual instinct for whom cruel treatment, public or private imprisonment, or the conventual life (that living grave), proved to be as implacable as a gaol? Margaret of Scotland, daughter of James I and wife of Louis the Dauphin (afterwards Louis XI), dying at the age of twenty, wailed: "Fie on my life; may none ever speak of it again to me." When we reflect upon the consummate joy which may be the lot of him who knows how

to live his life, and when we then recall the tragical utterance of the dying princess, swathed and banded like a mummy in her religious beliefs and in the prejudices of the social order of the epoch, dying because she could neither enjoy herself nor anything else, we realise how considerable has been the weight of the leaden cloak thrown across the shoulders of mortals by western civilisation.

This civilisation has steadily become more exacting. To-day it expects mankind to furnish renewed efforts which cannot but be fatal to nerves and mental stability alike. Sexual freedom might at least have acted as counterpoise to this state of affairs ; it might have brought a little pleasure, jollity, and happiness, such as may be seen to exist among peoples of other civilisations. But by a false conception of duty we are led to make a practical apologia for the sad life. Surly moralists chase away laughter declaring it to be unwholesome so soon as it is provoked by a speech, a book, or a picture referring to the life of sex. Sexual prohibitionists demand that everyone shall lead lives like their own, lives that are dull, artificial, often hypocritical, restrained by the barriers of taboo. Such penning-up of natural forces is apt to end in an explosion, a catastrophe—of the kind we have witnessed in twentieth century Russia. These disastrous consequences are unexpected only by those who set themselves up as the guardians of public morals. Our own time has come more especially under the puritanic harrow, and it is nowadays, when the mania for “artificial paradises” has developed out of all knowledge, that we see a morbid endeavour to achieve happiness by the aid of consolatory drugs because the joys provided by an active and rational sex life have been forbidden. The most anti-sexual of social groups, the peoples inhabiting North America, are also the ones among whom crime has reached its highest development. President Hoover, in an interview given to the Associated Press (April 1929), declared that nowhere throughout the world were the life and property of private citizens less

secure than in the U.S.A., where the annual murder rate is nine thousand; and that five-sixths of these homicides remain unpunished. During the first eight months of 1931 the number of the victims of fatal aggressions in the State of New York was 594. The President further said that criminality had increased since the introduction of prohibition, and that respect for the laws of the country was becoming so feeble that a revision of the penal system was imperative. These grave statements may best be considered in the light of the amazing increase in the popularity of the "thriller" type of book in the same country, where we see the public at large engrossed by the recital of the deeds of gangsters and other bandits. Hoover did not fail to press the point home in his interview, begging the newspaper men not to place such rascallions in the limelight but to give more publicity to those whose business it was to enforce respect for the law. Present-day tendencies to shower admiration upon the lawless prove that public opinion is thrown out of gear when too much severity is shown towards offences which the people in general refuse to regard as such. Thus respect for repressive measures is undermined. In like manner public opinion is disorganised by a complete reversal of moral values. A characteristic example may be culled from among English books of this type. *Raffles*, gentleman burglar (by Hornung), opens with a chapter which, if not an apologia for, is at least the most immoral conception of thieving it is possible to conceive. To the Anglo-Saxon mind, however, such a book is merely entertaining. But so soon as a frank description of sex life and activity is published, the British censorship comes down like a cartload of bricks. This explains why the detective novel has caught on so among the island reading public, whereas the love romance is always suspect to the puritanical mind. Irregular relationships outside the bonds of marriage are never to the fore in the thriller, and we are left, whenever necessary, to infer that a criminal commits bigamy every

time he resorts to polygamy. For at least you have to get "respectably married" before the crime of bigamy can be committed! These are blunders that are bound to react badly upon the civilisation which allows them to pass unchallenged. Certainly they detract seriously from the alleged perfection of our civilisation, that perfection about which there has been so much talk that people have almost come to believe in it.

A morbid hatred of sexual pleasures, prohibitions, stumbling-blocks, wry faces, persecution, can only set man's feet on the wrong path. Such artificial curtailments have rendered our human kind hysterical and neurasthenic; are, indeed, responsible for the whole psychical misery of the highly artificial modern age. For this state of things our anti-sexual policies must bear the main responsibility. The propagandists of these anti-sexual outlooks have been torturers; their doctrine has worked like a poison in the human organism, since it has brought madness and death in its wake, reducing the procreative forces of the more "civilised" among the nations—more civilised and therefore more tortured. The anti-sexual struggle is effectively killing off the peoples of Polynesia who are being immolated on the altar of western taboos; and many straws in the wind lead us to fear that the anti-sexual crusade is heading towards a depopulation of the West.

In a work by the Italian sociologist Ficai, quoted by L. Fèbvre (*La terre et l'évolution humaine*, p. 131), we learn that so-called sex crimes are of far more frequent occurrence in the southern parts of his country than in the northern. From this we should infer that the sexual life is more active among southern Italians, or, if you like, that they more vigorously and persistently make headway against repression and the censorship. Such an inference is confirmed by the higher birth rate of the south. In the same work we are told that "the number of sex crimes is in inverse ratio to that of illnesses and of cases of degeneracy; that there are

far more persons needing institutional care (epileptics, cretins, persons suffering from goitre and from mental disorders) in the north of Italy than in the south." This would make an interesting subject for study in other lands. Still, the example quoted would seem to show that where the sexual life is comparatively free from restraint there are fewer neuroses, and we hear less about those psycho-physical disturbances which modern specialists have found to be intimately linked with restrictions upon the sex life.

*Social Bankruptcy of Systems of Sexual Taboo.*—Although an anti-sexual policy has scored many a victory because a critical, scientific, and well organised public opinion has been lacking (it must be admitted that in certain countries the victory has been a crushing one!), we must on no account look upon this success as justifying the social system which brought it about. In many respects the victory is a fraud, is a specious outcome of the support furnished by outworn metaphysical and religious theories and beliefs, especially by the Judeo-Christian creeds which have not even yet lost their power over the minds of men.

We rebels venture to declare that the system has failed. To realise how great the failure is we need but turn to the martyrology of the sex life and recall the stories of neuropathy we have just been summarising. Failure to make an intelligent selection of basic principles, since prohibitionist formulas have been blindly chosen; failure from the practical outlook, because of the inference that sexual acts are illegitimate; failure from a scientific viewpoint, in that the demand to restore sexuality to the domain of physiology has been rejected; failure of logical deduction resulting in the most unwarrantable relationships being established between physiological fact and ethical values; failure of our civilisation, if by civilisation is meant the capacity to revise false estimates arrived at by primitive intelligences and the replacement of error by rational truths; complete social failure, since by treating as a curse one of



humanity's greatest means for enjoyment the State is made an official protector of the neuroses, is brought into conflict with individuals, and involves these in unceasing strife; and, finally, failure all along the line, since the system of restrictions was set up in order to protect reproduction, favour public health, and promote the integrity of the racial stock, whereas it must be admitted that sexual taboos have shown themselves signally incapable of doing anything of the sort.

Let us add that one of the reasons for this failure (one of the chief) has been the inability to turn the sexual life to account, for the individual and for the community, in a way which might enable mankind to draw all the joy, the pleasure, the charm, the consolation which it might give to our existence, otherwise so painful for those who refrain from decking its paths with the beauties nature offers. Even if we were only making the best of a bad job, we should be unpardonable if we did not seize this chance of making life better, happier, and worthier. Have we not, then, twofold reasons for criticising both our defective principles and our inadequate organisation, which hitherto have robbed mankind of one of its best solaces?

In his *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-analysis*, p. 296, Freud gives us a striking parable which I cannot refrain from quoting. He writes: "I will give it the title of one of Nestroy's vaudevilles, *On the Ground Floor and on the First*. The hall porter lives on the ground floor; the owner of the house, a wealthy man greatly respected, lives on the first floor. Both men are fathers, and we may suppose that the rich man's little girl is freely permitted to play with the working man's child. The children's games might possibly take an indecent, i.e. sexual, turn. They will play at 'father and mother', will try to see each other's private parts, may even touch and stimulate one another's genital organs. The wealthy man's daughter, although only five or six years old, may have had opportunities for studying the shape

and quality of adult sex organs. In such an event she will play the role of seducer. Now though such 'games' are soon tired of they will have awakened certain trends which will become active (even when the 'games' have long since been given up) in the form of masturbation. This kind of sexual activity may last several years. So far the experience of both children has been similar; but the consequences to each little girl will be very different. The porter's child will probably continue to masturbate until her menses appear; she will then give up the practice with scant difficulty, a few years later she will take a lover, perhaps have a baby, will adopt a career, become a popular actress, and wind up a member of the higher circles of society. Of course her life may not hold anything like so brilliant a destiny. But we can be pretty sure that no ill effects will come out of her precocious initiation into the sex life, and she will be free from neurosis.

"Very different is the fate of the rich man's daughter. While yet a child she will already feel she has done something wrong and will promptly set to work to cure herself of the habit. But the fight will be a terrible one, and the memory of her guilt will remain with her as a depressant. When she is old enough to learn the facts about sex relations she will show aversion, preferring to remain in ignorance. It sometimes happens in such a case that masturbation is again resorted to. . . . By the time she has reached an age when girls begin to dream of marriage the unhappy child will be a prey to neurosis which will produce in her mind a profound disappointment concerning marriage, and life will loom before her in the darkest colours. If the analyst were to succeed in disintegrating this neurosis he would find that the girl, well brought up, able, and idealistic, had completely repressed her sexual inclinations into the unconscious, where they had become linked with the 'naughty' games at which she had formerly played with her young friend.

"Although the initial events were identical in the two cases, the fate of the two girls diverged wholly because the ego of one had undergone a totally different course of development from her partner's. The porter's daughter was later to enter into sexual activities in a perfectly natural way and as free from mental reservations as were the sex games and masturbation of her childhood's days. But the middle-class girl came under the influence of education and all that it demands, and she had formed an ideal of what feminine purity and chastity should be like—an ideal utterly incompatible with sexual activity. Her intellectual training had, further, unfitted her for the part she should normally play as a woman. Because her moral and intellectual training had been on a higher level than that of her erstwhile friend she came into conflict with the demands of her sex life."

I have ventured to quote this passage in its entirety for it is rare indeed to find so striking an indictment of the prohibitive system under which we live. The two cases are clear-cut and precise in every detail. On the one hand we see the person who escapes the grip of a repression as unnatural as it is merciless and destructive, and this can mainly be ascribed to a less complete and less dangerous education and upbringing. The result is a normal and tolerably happy life. On the other hand we see a girl trained under a system of ethical taboos which leaves her no loophole whence to escape, and react against false principles. She suffers the intolerable agonies of an artificial, incomplete, and unhappy life, and finally becomes a neuropath to whom sexual activity is revolting. Doctrines must be judged by the consequences they lead to. From erroneous premises we come to morbid conclusions. And is it not a terrible condemnation of an ethical system when, sticking to these false premises and even anxious to impose their tyrannical demands upon every one, the protagonists of sexual taboos have crushed mankind beneath the yoke of laws which are as destructive to health as to happiness?

The civilisation which is the outcome of these systems of prohibition is believed to be superior to any other form of cultural life, and the people who uphold it look upon its conventions as laws of nature. But is it not even now the result of primitive incertitudes and errors? Is it not even now heavily burdened by the load of these earlier mistakes? Is it not a paltry stage in our semi-barbarian organisations? Surely it is barbarism when, as we learned from our study of the legitimacy of sexual acts, legal institutions or social conventions are based upon affirmations which are not merely undemonstrated but are repugnant to reason; when they are based upon associations of ideas that are false because from assumed causes consequences are deduced that do not really follow; when they are based upon moral or legal relations asserted to be necessary when reality makes no such demand, or at any rate does not show them to be of universal application. Is it not the business of civilised societies to avoid these causes of error, to prove their falseness, and to replace them by scientifically conceived and rationally fashioned ideas? Other states and conditions, parasitic upon such primitive mistakes, holding fast to them, introducing them into the legal codes—are they not every one of them negations of genuine civilisation?

The charge that our civilisation is based upon totally wrong principles is a formidable one. But would it not be possible to defend our barbarous institutions? The defenders need merely adduce a few facts, need only show some of the fruitful, happy, beneficial results of extant sexual policy. Well, what are the facts? Our social life is seething with uneasiness; young persons are placed in penitentiaries merely because they indulged their sexual feelings; good folk, useful citizens, are tracked down, threatened with dismissal or prevented from getting a better job, denounced by sex prohibitionists, because these honest workers believe they have the right to gratify their sexual impulse to the full; sentences are pronounced in court so cruel that they

are capable of ruining a man's whole career because he has performed a natural act which the law itself upholds if certain formalities have preceded it; women kill themselves because they are going to have a baby—that joy and pride of womanhood—and dare not risk the disgrace of having an unfathered child; thousands of abortions are procured to avoid the slur our moralists would impose upon an illegitimate offspring; a natural, physiological act, much on a line with feeding, but so distorted from its original purpose that some people find it impossible to perform and have preferred death to its accomplishment; so many beings sacrificed—sent to prison, into exile, into a convent, to death—because they have exercised their sexual functions outside the bounds of conventional forms; in a word, almost universal delirium brought about by an illogical, an unscientific system which has overreached the limits of the possible. R. de Gourmont tells us in his *Culture des idées* (p. 201) that “certain medical practitioners of the twentieth century have suggested, in all seriousness, and in the name of science, virtue, social well-being, that it would be wise to look upon every sexual act performed outside the bonds of marriage as a criminal offence”.

By stubbornly refusing to recognise reality, this anti-sex policy leads to even greater stupidities, for it places the very persons it is supposed to protect in the gravest peril. May we not reasonably ascribe periodical outbursts of brutality, rapes and killings of children, to the restrictions imposed upon normal sex gratification? Typical examples of such murderous onslaughts are not lacking. I recall the famous crime committed in Saint-Aubin cemetery by Brother Léotade, the Soleillant affair, the murder of Marian Parker at Los Angeles, and many another deed of violence. During the trial of Brother Léotade the procurator general said in his summing up that the immediate motive of the deed was “the senses which had not been disciplined by the rules laid down to keep them in check”, and, further, that the

mind and heart of the culprit was "a stage whereon ceaseless war was being waged". To-day restrictions upon sex activity are not confined to religious communities, for the whole machinery of society is put into motion in order to place artificial and insufferable taboos upon the normal functioning of sex. People suffocate under the load of prohibitions; they turn troubled eyes towards some means of escape from interference with and persecution of their natural tendencies, and, finding none within the confines of the legal, they slip downward into a pit of baseness wherein they commit the most heinous offences, and find pleasure in the spilling of blood. When in 1931 Madge Cleife was done to death, the London press drew public attention to the alarming increase in the frequency of criminal assaults upon women. Such acts of violence increase in proportion to the number of hindrances encumbering the path of young persons wishing for easy and normal access to the pleasures afforded by sex activity. A London police officer suggested that prostitution should be listed as a prosecutable crime. If ever a law of the sort should find a niche in the statute book we may be pretty sure that criminologists will have to deal with far more complicated issues than they now foresee.

The lack of sex freedom is directly responsible for a large number of crimes. A French investigator, travelling through the U.S.A. in 1929, furnishes the following details as to the criminological statistics of the State of Minnesota: "The offences are enumerated under eighty-three heads. My first reaction to this very carefully compiled work was one of astonishment at the number of sexual offences. We are given the appallingly high figure of 25 cases of incest in a single year. There were 28 indecent assaults; 39 rapes upon girls under eighteen years of age, 17 upon girls under fourteen, and many other attempted assaults even fouler than these. The population is almost entirely agricultural, and its hot-blooded character has so far failed to be tempered by

cultural amenities." (René Puaux, "Le Temps", April 11, 1930.) The well-known psychiatrist Dr. Brill tells us that the tortures which accompany lynchings go to show that such deeds are of an erotic nature and can only be performed by persons afflicted with sexual perversions. This fact is culled from Madeleine Paz's book *Frère Noir* (p. 85). All modern psychiatrists are agreed as to the closeness of the ties existing between morbid cruelty and the neurosis which is its cause. Thus civilisations constructed upon the denial of normal processes and which at the same time do violence to nature are not only made up of sad and tortured people but are likewise undermined by outbursts of cruelty which leave the more cultured inhabitants aghast.

The conflict between undue prohibition and human nature must inevitably find an outlet in explosive violence. Nor are we unjustified in asking whether resistance to taboos is not proof of a vitality which is precious to the human race. Were it to disappear from among us, hounded to earth by triumphant puritanism, would not our species by abdicating its rights prove itself to be in a condition of such decay as to be incapable of further propagation? In communities where sexual freedom prevails, we hardly ever hear of these crimes, for sex relations are easy, they are looked upon with an indulgent eye, girls can enter into them without running the risk of intolerant censure. Therewith nature's seal is placed upon actions which are not distorted by unnatural austerity.

*Social Confusion caused by "Sexual Morality".*—Profound bewilderment troubles the minds of the men of our civilisation. They see so many contradictions in the social order which imposes the present system of "sexual morality" that it might justifiably be called "social anarchy". Well-meaning morality-mongers, usually simple-minded folk who have jumped to conclusions, are themselves astounded at the prevailing chaos. Contradictions are unavoidable when two such powers collide—one, Nature,

demanding satisfaction for the sexual needs of humanity; the other, the Force of the taboo, artificially brought into being but cunningly upheld upon fear of the unknown and of supernatural agencies. So far as sex values are concerned, these contradictions lead to a welter of utterly unexpected tolerances and of arbitrary sanctions.

Literature, and especially poesy, owe their existence largely to love; they comment upon love, sing its praise, exalt it. Nor is it only platonic love which is celebrated in song and saga, but the frank delight of sensual pleasures. No sooner, however, do we pass from theory to practice than we find the way barred by the moral code which is so conceived as to forbid any sex pleasures outside the bounds of convention. Novelists may go into ecstasies about the charms of womanhood, and it is deemed quite correct for a woman to be highly conscious and proud of her charms. Nor need we doubt for a moment that these charms include the organs of sex which physiologists do not find charming in themselves but merely attractive because of the fascination they exercise upon the sexual appetite. Yet should these same charms be exposed to the public gaze, they would be designated obscene. Indeed, any such exhibition is forbidden by the law. The technical name of the external genital organs in both sexes is "the pudendum".<sup>1</sup> Should a woman deliberately expose her breasts she would be accused of indecency: yet a suckling mother or a wet-nurse may offer her breast to the nursling while sitting on a bench in a public park. Children are taught the ways of plant fertilisation and propagation, but nothing must be said about the same functions in the animal world—yet how infinitely more useful such information would be for their future experience. It is considered permissible to depict the human body completely nude in pictures or statues, but to depict the pubic hair is considered indecent.

Look around and observe the moral standards of man-

<sup>1</sup> That which it is meet to be ashamed of.



kind. Here is a man who is willing to marry a widow or a divorced woman, but who would flatly refuse to have anything to do with a lass who has surrendered her virginity. A woman may commit adultery—and many do so nowadays in certain circles of society—but she must be careful not to offend the conventions, not to flaunt her misconduct; so long as her extra-conjugal activities remain hearsay, no one will feel it a duty to reproach her. She must never be obvious. An adulteress, even when she trails a procession of men behind her, or has many lovers in succession, will be received in houses where an immaculately faithful concubine cannot hope to find admittance. The lady of easy virtue is likewise a centre of moral chaos. Modern society has gone crazy over actresses and film stars who sail high in the fashionable firmament of the day. No one questions the morality of their behaviour—though it may be scandalous, and in nothing different from that of a prostitute who has been less successful in storming the stage or screen. Far from being shunned, such light o' loves are eagerly courted. If, however, acquaintance were struck up with a prostitute, this misfortune would be carefully hidden away from sight. Yet are not all these cases closely alike? Those who are lucky enough to possess a car and a fine establishment are secured from police interference, they can boast of a delightful circle of friends, often they exert considerable influence in society; they may, too, make an advantageous marriage. Fans eagerly buy the newspapers where portraits of these exquisites appear; they are looked upon as *grandes dames*, and in the popular estimation rank with the upper class.

An explanation of these manifold contradictions is easy, for the tendency to hide sexual manifestations constantly comes into conflict with the physiological need for enjoying sexual activities. The tendencies are mutually exclusive. As a matter of fact society makes desperate efforts to find a reason for these plentiful contradictions, and it cannot

be held responsible for the clumsy working of the taboo. Confusedly it is felt that they must be the outcome of a profound misunderstanding. Our contemporaries are in much the same position in relation to present-day sex standards as were their ancestors in face of religious belief before the Scriptures had been interpreted and translated into popular tongues and before rationalism and agnosticism became the vogue. These moderns of an earlier epoch also struggled in the meshwork of contradictions, uncertainties, and incoherences with which the official creeds had become entangled. They vaguely felt that false principles underlay the whole fabric of religious "revelation", that on a day to come this essential falseness would stand revealed for what it truly was, and that the revelation would change the trends of human thought. Not until the eighteenth century was well advanced, however, did public discussion of such questions become allowable. The present-day condition of sex morals recalls vividly the tyranny exercised by the religious dogmas of those earlier centuries—and for identical reasons. Purity and chastity, the dogmas issuing from sex taboos, can only exist in the realm of metaphysic and do not bear scientific examination by physiologists or philosophers.

Through forbidding sexual enjoyment our societies have become hypocritical, so that one group will belaud the so-called "virtue of abstinence", hating it the while and doing in secret what they fear to uphold in public, whilst another group, fanatical prohibitionists, set themselves up as informers, and exercise upon the free minded a cruel restraint imposed by ruthless ethical codes. The spirit of intolerance was not banned in the religious realm until many battles had been fought and much blood spilled. The same spirit of intolerance is abroad in the sexual realm to-day, and there are many who would gladly see the resurrection of auto-da-fés for the punishment of sex heresies just as their forebears of the same kidney rejoiced greatly at the burnings

of religious heretics. Similar weapons are used as of old: denunciations, investigations, spying upon private lives, slanders, anathemas spoken in the name of the taboo. So far as sex taboos are concerned we are still in the primitive time when those who uphold the taboo have the advantage of refusing to discuss the truth of the principles they uphold. Sexual taboos need a Voltaire to break them down. Until such a prophet arises, our legislators will continue to ratify every prohibition which reactionaries can devise to hamper the free enjoyment of sex activities.

*Theory of Sublimation and Criticism thereof.*—Freud and his disciples sometimes recommend what they term “sublimation” as a sort of remedy for sex neurosis. The fact that they speak of a “remedy” should put us on the alert, for we know that there is no genuine disease present. With this reservation, I agree that sublimation is the expression of the power, which to some extent exists, of utilising for other purposes the forces that activate the libido. Freud writes in his *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-analysis*: “Having renounced the partial gratification of the sexual instinct or of the act of propagation, a person will find a substitute for these forms of activity in other aims related genetically to the first, but from which the sex content has been expunged to be replaced by a social content.”

Let us be quite sure we all mean the same thing. If we are to understand that the full activity which sexual desire (libido) would have spent in its own behalf, has been repressed and censored and has then been transferred into another domain of activity, nothing could be more exact. In *Sex Life and Sex Ethics* (p. 227), I investigated the mechanism of the neuroses, and showed how on occasion these neuroses would quite unexpectedly find expression in another field of activity. But that is the most it is wise to say in the matter, and we should do well to go easy with the term “sublimation” lest it give rise to ideas which might prove less intrinsically correct. It would seem to suggest that

repressed sexual desire invariably develops interesting qualities, which at times rise to the exceptional plane of genius or into the realm of the sublime. Is this true?

When the libido is repressed, when its impetus is crushed back, it is forced to find an outlet by some other route. A human being would, therefore, be comparable to a feather pillow which on being punched in one place immediately finds compensation by forming a bulge elsewhere. But this compensation is not necessarily useful, superior, and worthy of admiration. It can just as well be harmful and destructive. We know of cases where young wives whose husbands neglect them and who are incapable of finding satisfaction elsewhere, take to cocaine, opium, or alcoholic stimulants, and ultimately become incurable drug-addicts. In modern times, when young girls and young wives have achieved about as many freedoms as men, these young women, especially at mixed parties, fly to the artificial pleasure aroused by drink or drugs. Mankind—and more profoundly does this apply to women—feels the need for a minimal dose of nervous excitation, and thoroughly enjoys it. The cocktail craze, loudly denounced by twentieth-century hygienists, serves this end, giving things a “kick”. Anti-sexual codes, as practised to-day, no longer permit the “kick”, the excitation, to come from the sex function; the natural path being blocked, the needed kick is found among artificial products. Before the European invasion of their isles, young Tahitian couples never needed to have recourse to such artificial stimuli. There are still races in the world to-day which have managed to escape contamination by anti-sexual standards, and, among these peoples, looks, gestures, invitations are gracious and simple, so that the loving pairs find no difficulty in yielding to a caress. Such folk might justly paraphrase a famous saying by telling us: “that’s our cocktail.” Certainly health would suffer less from the caress-cocktail than from those made with alcoholic beverages. Happily the power of prohibitions and taboos

is on the wane, and the sex "kick" is coming into its own once more. A means is furnished by the organisation of dance parties, especially those where modern dances are performed—for ball-room dancing has always been an outlet for sexual emotions.

These are a few only of the more unsavoury outcomes of repressing the natural forms of sex expression. Repress the instinct as we may, it is bound to crop up in some other manifestation, and if the manifestation proves obviously undesirable and harmful then we surely cannot speak of it as a "sublimation". So far from being sublime such deviations are less praiseworthy and less beneficial than the normal performance of the sex act, and if that act is equipped with the aureole of legitimacy it is incapable of being harmful in any way.

Sublimation is, as we have seen, the transference of an activity into other channels. If sublimation finds expression in activities acceptable to extant moral standards it meets with praise, whereas other forms are condemned. Thus if the repressed sexual act is deviated into literary channels instead of into a too frequent lifting of the elbow, society rests content. But the process is the same. In either case a natural force lying idle finds a derivative.

In general, artistic, literary, and philanthropic manifestations would be of little value if they were solely derivatives of a repressed sexuality. They would appear to be something other, something different. A civilisation adorned by such worth-while, by such obviously good works, does not necessitate the repression of the sex life. It can very well exist alongside a thoroughly satisfactory, active, and free sexuality. Many an artist, many an imaginative author, has proved by his works that the two things are by no means incompatible. People are too apt to forget those highly civilised societies wherein sexual activities occupied their legitimate and undisputed place, without hampering in the least the development of other pursuits. Western example

is too often accepted as a matter of course. Freud writes that sublimation is "one of the most important factors in the upward trend of civilisation" (*Three Essays*). This seems to me an exaggeration, and, further, it implies that all modern civilisations are brought into being by neuropaths—since sublimation is a pathological symptom resulting from a privation neurosis. This may appear a hard judgment to some folk, yet it is probably correct. Are not the most civilised nations of our day (I use the word civilised in its modern sense) those among which neuroses happen to be the most widely prevalent? They are indubitably the least capable of a suitable standard of reproduction. If this be true then we should fight against them and not congratulate ourselves on their existence.

The impetus which might be given to the realisation of better and better social culture by the free working of the libido, is a genuine quality of the libido and of no other force. Sex manifestations, amoral and perfectly legitimate, the forces brought into activity by the sexual instinct—none of these phenomena should be diverted into alien paths. To do so is once again to close a natural outlet to the emotions, to fall back into the complicated and vicious circle of repression, the censorship, and anti-sexualism; it is to rebuild the fragile, the disastrous edifice founded upon the idea that sexual indulgence is fundamentally immoral.

When we refuse to turn the sexual energies into other channels for the winning of other goals, we escape the risks that attend the strangling of natural and legitimate desire. Unqualified acceptance of the Freudian idea of sublimation implies a belief that only certain specific forces are at our disposal for the improvement of the race, and that these limited sources of progress are exclusive. That is an oversimplification. Even were the libido utilised solely for the satisfaction of the libido itself there would still be a surplus of other forces serving other aims, artistic or social as the case might be. These forces are self-sufficing. Should they

be absent in an individual we are misled if we fancy that they can be called into existence by appealing to another source of energy which happens at the moment to be disengaged. If such a thing be attempted, we are likely to suffer serious disappointment; for, on a day to come, the energy which has been set to the fulfilment of aims it was never meant to undertake will unexpectedly revert to its primitive function, and, to the astonishment of the on-lookers, all the labour which has been ostensibly devoted to a particular task will be interrupted, becoming distasteful to the person who hitherto had been fraudulently devoting this special energy to the achievement of a goal it was not destined for.

Freud himself points out in his *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-analysis* how vain a thing it is to think that by "sublimation" we can master the libido and its imperious demands. "Your impression now will be that we have reduced want of satisfaction to a factor of negligible proportions by the recognition of so many means of enduring it. But no; this is not so, it retains its pathogenic power. The means of dealing with it are not always sufficient. The measure of unsatisfied libido that the average human being can take upon himself is limited. The plasticity and free mobility of the libido is not by any means retained to the full in all of us; and sublimation can never discharge more than a certain proportion of libido, apart from the fact that many people possess the capacity for sublimation only in a slight degree." (Op. cit., pp. 290-291.) It is not, therefore, unfair to ask which alternative is most deserving of criticism: a sublimation bound to remain imperfect and to leave the subject in a state of anxiety; or a libido of which enough remains unsublimated to give rise to incurable neurosis.

*First Inference: The Individual and Social Results of Sexual Neuroses call for the Suppression of Anti-sexual Taboos.*—What are we to deduce from the foregoing discussion? If sexual

neurosis brings about such terrible consequences both to the individual and to the social environment, we are led to the following conclusions:

(1) That the harmful results of repression furnish unimpeachable evidence that repression is against nature;

(2) Since repression is due to the systems of sexual taboos, such systems are unnatural policies, are a danger to the nervous and mental stability of mankind, and must be condemned;

(3) It is a waste of time to try and cure the results of repression among the numerous persons it has rendered ill, instead of attacking the causes of the sickness, i.e. repression itself and the system of sexual prohibitions giving rise to it. A physician's task must always be to prevent rather than to cure.

A pleasant drive, a concert, a bowdlerised play, or a stay at the seaside are not sufficient in themselves to relieve and to cure the neuroses of those boys and girls who, though young, are anaemic, dull, slack, hollow-faced and piteous-eyed. They continue in spite of such diversions to drag along moodily by the side of their guards, their bodies and their minds tortured by ungratified desire, and by the prick of needs which they are impotent to assuage. What their whole being clamours for is sexual satisfaction. This is what they hope for by day and by night, this is what their eyes seek with an anguish they barely trouble to conceal. Happiness? Normal life? Hope? All these good things vanish into thin air when taboos are placed upon the life of sex. Where there is freedom in sexual affairs everything revives, everything blossoms anew. Liberty drives out the menaces of exhaustion and neurosis which otherwise are allowed to invade our societies causing there a lack of poise and equilibrium. It is time to relieve the sex life of the curse which weighs upon it. For the true gala of boy or girl is the gala of sex, the festivity of possessing and of being possessed. Without freedom in the sexual sphere all else is dun-coloured and devoid of charm.



Every psychiatrist should make a proclamation along these lines, for it furnishes a scientific basis whereon to upbuild the system of sexual liberty.

*Second Inference: The Legitimacy of Sexual Acts implies Sexual Freedom.*—We have seen above that sexual acts (as plainly beyond good and evil as are any other physiological functions) are as legitimate as our other bodily needs. This does not require further discussion here, for the principle was thoroughly dealt with during our investigation of the mechanistic theory of sexuality (*Sex Life and Sex Ethics*). But it remains to show with somewhat greater precision the wherefore of our assumption that sexual freedom is justified since it is a legitimate and justifiable means for satisfying our bodily needs.

If obtaining sexual pleasure be a legitimate action by its own prerogative, what right has anyone to prohibit it or to shackle it, or to persecute those who seek it or cater for it? Of course, as with other evils men do, we have to impose restrictions upon acts of violence in the realm of sex. But if the gratification of sexual desire be legitimate, any method (barring those that may harm the partner or be inflicted without his or her consent) for achieving the end, participate in this legitimacy. It is a matter of individual taste or of personal convenience what methods be adopted. No one has the right to protest or to interfere in this purely private business.

When the prohibitionists not only seek to impose vetoes upon the free exercise of the ordinary act of coitus but go further and propose to excommunicate every mechanical means capable of replacing it or suitable as a variant of the normal procedure, it must be obvious that such persons and the rationalist-minded analyst who has accepted the mechanistic theory of sex can no longer speak the same language.

Whereas the prohibitionists treat sexual gratification as disgraceful and as constituting a danger, our rationalist

philosopher looks upon it as a legitimate satisfaction of a need, as an action which does not require to be performed on the sly, and about which society has no right to busy itself if the partners are unanimous in consent. To condemn a person's fancy in matters of sex, to try to prevent an adult from freely disposing of the body, to place an embargo on the art of the courtesan—all these are the outcome of primitive taboos and of the moral standards pertaining to these. But once they have been set aside by a rational act of self-assertion, do they not appear as utterly nonsensical, as useless and harmful? No rationalist need give ground before the assaults of the prohibitionist theory. Why should the latter be looked upon as the only possible basis whereon to build up society, morals, and the law? The utmost we can provisionally admit is that there may be room for both systems in order to cater for varying tastes. A useful example to recall in this connection is the reform of marriage laws in the West, and especially of those concerning the religious celebration of marriage and the civil ceremony. In earlier times the former was the only permissible way of uniting a man and woman in wedlock; nowadays in almost every land of western culture the choice is left to the parties concerned. A rationalist couple will choose the civil rite, and this formality is no longer regarded as immoral, neither is it considered on a lower grade than a religious marriage. Our example would seem to suggest that a choice may be given as between conflicting tendencies, so that each man's preferences may receive due respect. Such a system of give and take, in which the two methods are allowed to develop side by side without hindering one another, is likely to succeed better than a compromise which satisfies no one.

The attitude adopted in regard to sexual activities is one of mistrust on the part of society and of enthusiasm on the part of the individual. A contradiction seems to be implied. But there is nothing of the sort. All we need bear in mind is that the attitude of society is a conventional one, whereas

the attitude of the individual corresponds to immutable truth. Sexual freedom is required, so that logical brains may be able to reconcile certain aspects of life whose exterior semblance is utterly different. It furnishes society with the possibility of adhering to traditional formulas of taboo, and for the individual it provides the right to buttress against the principle of legality the formal adoption of a liberated sexuality without rendering him suspect of adhering to theories which might prove harmful to the community.

A reform of the sexual code will have far-reaching consequences. What will have to be done is to grant the right of asylum to sexual freedom based upon rational principles, so that such liberty of conduct may function alongside the taboos and prohibitions. Ultimately, of course, the former is likely to sweep away the latter. Rationalists, however, in the spirit of toleration which is the sign under which they work, would never try to prevent their opponents from living according to personal conviction; there is no drawback in the practice of chastity and of continence, so long as this is kept a strictly private rule of life; nor is the hour when they are demanding freedom for themselves the one rationalists should choose for refusing similar liberties to others. Sexual freedom implies, not only freedom in the practice of sexual activities, but likewise, for those who so desire, freedom to abstain from sexual activities. This is precisely what makes rationalism so enormously superior as a moral and social criterion, superior to all the systems based upon taboos, to all the systems which, once in the saddle, are expected to do away with everything that fails to fit into their scheme of things.

Further, rationalism has another advantage, one of inestimable value to men of good will and sincerity. Our anti-sexual code has led the western civilisations into a morass of neuroses. A no less serious scourge is the sexual hypocrisy to which it gives rise. Here I am not referring to those who hide themselves to perform a deed they are ashamed of

owning to in public or which they flatly deny if put to the test. Much worse is that "sincere hypocrisy" (if the paradoxical juxtaposition of two incongruous words be permitted), that unconscious work of the mind which, though convinced of the value, the legitimacy, and the excellence of sexual acts and the good these acts bring in their train, nevertheless succeeds in degrading them and in looking upon them, in spite of the clamour of the senses, as despicable. Never was human lucidity of thought, never was man's honesty more grossly abused. By means of this intellectual conjuring-trick parents can bring themselves to forbid their children the pleasure of doing the very things they themselves delighted to do in their young days, judges calmly condemn those whose actions are similar to what they themselves do in privacy, priests in the confessional complacently treat all manifestations of sex as "sins", and so on. In a word, hypocrisy is a no less terrible evil than calumny her terrible sister. In a free social order, she would be the first to disappear—and who would be found to raise any protest or to show any regret?

*Philosophical Foundation of Sexual Freedom upon Freedom of Conscience.*—To overcome the passions (in the psychological sense of that term) does not mean to suppress them in deference to a futile asceticism or a metaphysical chimera; it means learning to give them reasonable scope without injury to oneself or to others, thereby making them bear valuable fruit. Such is the purpose of the principle that sexual acts are legitimate, such is the goal of sexual freedom; and to suppress sexual gratification or to render its attainment difficult is to fly in the face of these desirable aims. On the other hand a discipline which recognises that the aims are sound and desirable for the promotion of a happy and natural life is entitled to the utmost respect.

For those who withhold respect from anything which does not tend to promote a healthy and natural life, it is proper and prudent to guard against the tyranny of persons

who would, if they could, in the name of taboos, impose all sorts of restrictions on individual liberty. If chastity is not entitled to more respect than sexual indulgence, if the one and the other are but conditions which anyone is entitled to adopt or not as he prefers, we may protest with just as much energy against the attempt to forbid either. Let us insist upon freedom of discussion, which would be infringed by placing the terms "chastity" and "sexual morality" under taboo. Too often, however, they are invoked to justify some fresh interference with individual liberty, whereupon those who were inclined to oppose such a measure, being browbeaten by the authority of a name, will support that which at bottom they disapprove.

To those whose rule of life is to adopt an anti-sexual religious discipline in obedience to what they regard as an overwhelming authority which must be unquestioningly obeyed, to those who dread the critical spirit and resent its audacity, we shall not venture to emphasise our view that sexual gratification is essentially legitimate. Yet why should those who have renounced all expectation of supernatural compensations, and who look the more fervently towards this life and its pleasures because they do not expect a life beyond the grave, be deprived by society or by law of one of the greatest of human joys? For these latter, the question answers itself. Their postulates hold together. The legitimacy, the mechanical character, and the amorality of the sexual act, are fundamental parts of their rationalist outlook on life; and become natural elements of their freedom to think as they please and to live their own lives.

Nowadays we enjoy freedom of conscience. Well, is there anything more appurtenant to this freedom than the choice of a morality, the decision as to what does and what does not come within the scope of that morality, and the definition of the actions to which (rightly or wrongly) we ascribe a moral value?

In very truth, freedom of conscience is here at stake. It

is no less at stake in matters of sexual conduct than in philosophy or in politics, and assumedly we cannot but be struck by the fact that in the twentieth century freedom of conscience should be denied or restricted hardly anywhere else than in the domain of sex. Of course it is a violation of freedom of conscience when anyone prescribes sexual indulgence for one who wishes to abstain from it. But it is equally a violation to forbid sexual indulgence when anyone wishes for sex relations that do not involve violence to others. This is so because, equally in the conscience of one who abstains and in that of one who indulges, there is, on a plane above the act and prior to the act, a set determination to be faithful to the principles that have been adopted as a rule of life. The proclamation of sexual freedom is an indispensable, irrefutable, and valuable complement to freedom of conscience. Why is it, then, that those who have indefatigably and incessantly championed freedom of conscience, fail to battle with no less ardour on behalf of sexual freedom?

Their great mistake is that they have not ranged the idea of moral freedom side by side with those of metaphysical (or religious) and political freedom. In the two latter domains freedom of choice or freedom of conscience is generally regarded as beyond dispute. But as concerns morality, this is supposed to be a matter of the emotions and the will, which are psychologically induced and are subordinate to psycho-physiological laws. Moral hygienists and psychiatrists are fond of saying as much. Because of this confusion, in the fields of individual and social morality freedom of choice is still denied, though it is granted where religion and politics are in question. We need not be surprised, for the time-lag is at work. Centuries were needed before freedom of conscience could be secured in philosophy and politics. State religions and divine right were in being until yesterday. Morality has not yet achieved as much progress. Moralists continue to believe in a transcendental

authority to whose fiats we must conform willy-nilly. They are scandalised when this authority is repudiated, and maintain that no one has a right to think freely upon moral questions. Hence the disastrous mistake on the part of those moralists who declare, on principle, that there are certain ways of regarding love, sex relations, marriage, and the family which are "absolutely" valid, so that any departure from such views is anomalous, morbid, psychopathic. With these indisputable axioms they revive the hideous error of the fanatics who used to burn the infidel and his books in the same bonfire.

If there is a close kinship between freedom of conscience and the principle of the legitimacy of sex relations, there is another conquest of modern thought to which the latter principle is also closely allied. Individual liberty has of late been loudly advocated. To be master of one's own person, not to be called upon to account to another for one's actions, but only to the law which is of general application, to have no reason for dreading the caprice or the tyranny of someone entitled to exert unrestricted power, to be able to organise one's life as one pleases so that one is oneself responsible for one's good fortune or one's bad, the unchallenged privilege of revising contracts (this implying that no vows can bind in perpetuity, that marriage can be terminated by divorce, etc.)—such respect for individual rights as most of us have come to regard as essential to happiness, is sharply contrasted with the obsolete legal codes that permitted slavery, with the dangerous right of interference in private affairs which used in former days to be granted by the sacrosanct principle of authority, the unrestricted powers of the *paterfamilias*, and the official or semi-official sway of dogma. But this individualism on which we plume ourselves is far from being a mere cult of the ego, such as that which the half-baked fancy of an amateur philosopher like Barrès depicts. It is the right to be and to remain one's own self. It is a legalised status.

That is why it is far less open to attack than are the aesthetic and unstable poses of the author of the *Jardin de Bérénice*. It is a most valuable endowment, and must be defended without ceasing since it is continually being attacked on all sides by those who hold mutually conflicting views. Persons of a servile trend join forces with authoritarians, the former surrendering positions even more rapidly than the latter can encroach. The difficulties of organisation in a society which grows steadily more complicated, exacting, harassing, meddlesome, and artificialised, are made the pretext for increasing restrictions on personal liberty. People fancy that they are progressing when they impose more and more hindrances to the freedom of work, pleasure, eating, and drinking; whereas in reality these would-be innovators are merely reviving the puerilities of those taboos which among primitive tribes incessantly hamper individual freedom.

This freedom essentially implies the right to the free disposal of oneself, both physically and morally. It entails the free disposal of the body, this being the only unrestricted gift received by us at birth and the only one we are entitled to preserve without let or hindrance till we die. The lack of any obligation to bestow this body on a person who is distasteful to us, that is only one aspect of the problem, and almost the sole aspect about which the interventionists trouble themselves, while falsifying the basic principle by introducing erroneous moral considerations. But the right to dispose of one's own flesh and blood without the authorisation or approbation of a third party; the consequent right to perform sexual acts on one's own responsibility and in accordance with one's own preferences; the right to refuse any alien intervention in the sexual life, and, while regulating it exclusively in accordance with one's own will and pleasure, to remain independent of others' scrutiny—these essential prerogatives, which derive as we have seen from the principle of individual liberty, are also the natural



consequences of the doctrine that sexual acts are legitimate. For this legitimacy is self-sufficient; it entitles us to ward off the efforts of the interventionists; a priori it nullifies any interference by third parties, and therefore any interference by moral codes and laws formulated by those who would like to impose them as universally binding upon persons convinced of their falsity or relativity.

## CHAPTER II

### PRACTICE OF SEXUAL FREEDOM: GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Conditions favouring Sexual Freedom.—Denunciation and Disastrous Consequences of the Doctrine of Carnal Sin.—Subjective Acquisition of Sexual Freedom.—Guiding Principles of Sexual Freedom: A. Formal Adhesion to the System of the Legitimacy of Sexual Acts.—B. Subjective Conquest of Repression and the Censorship.—C. Disappearance of the Notions of Sexual Immorality and Sexual Shame.—D. Sexual Enjoyment as a Natural and Fundamentally Avowable Pleasure.—E. Sexual Acts and Human Dignity.

*Conditions favouring Sexual Freedom.*—There need be no difficulty about recognising that people have very varying capacities for ridding themselves of sexual taboos. Those who, owing to race, education, or deliberate exercise of the will, are free from repressions or nearly so, will find it much easier to discard sexual taboos. Since a craze for sexual prohibition is akin to these taboos, it is obvious that the more anyone is disinclined to accept unwarranted orders and is refractory to any attempt to impose them, in a word, the more effectively rationalist he or she is in principles and methods, the more easily will such a person be able to throw off causeless prohibitions and to accept the idea of the legitimacy of sexual acts. Conversely, one whose mind has been permeated with anti-sexual dogmas, and especially with those of Judeo-Christian origin, may prove totally unable to jettison his anti-sexual prejudices. Toleration is a fruit of the rationalist tree, and will not refresh the parched mouths of fanatics. As everyone must be aware, we live in an artificial world where matters of sex are concerned, one that is wholly shaped in accordance with the injunctions of a fanatically anti-sexual policy. The critical spirit aims at making short work of this artificial system and at replacing it with realities. But before

we can do so, we must be possessed of the critical spirit, must know how to make use of it, must love it, instead of preferring blind obedience, non-discussion, servility. A person of servile temperament knows only too well how all the taboos join forces for defence when any one of them is seriously menaced; and to ask such an individual to be logical and scientific is to expose him to a test in which he will almost certainly fail.

Religious systems have made a serious mistake in hampering an essential part of their dogmas by alliance with a taboo so arbitrary, illogical, and anti-scientific. That is why, in the case of our western creeds, ecclesiastical discussions upon sexual matters, even when carried on by those who (like certain Protestant divines) are inclined to revise traditions that are plainly out of date, can make no serious contribution to the work of sexual reform. They are paralysed from the start because the protagonists cling perforce to the amazing theory of carnal sin. There can be no compromise between those who take a rationalist view of the sexual life, and those whose minds are fettered by the notion of sins of the flesh.

*Denunciation and Disastrous Consequences of the Doctrine of Carnal Sin.*—Few theories have done as much harm to mankind as the doctrine of carnal sin. The mischief has been wrought, not only by giving fictive importance to a palpable fable that is Papuan in its simplicity, but also by the ravages it has made generation after generation. This is what has led modern man, eager to find excuses for committing "sins of the flesh", to replace a frank and straightforward sexual enjoyment by a double-distilled metaphysic of love which is exacting, jealous, conventionalised. It will end by becoming incomprehensible; and already its results are incoherent for those who have not been forewarned against its perils.

All the difficulties attached to western sexual morality derive from our way of contemplating sexual manifestations

through the distorting lenses of the doctrine of sin. Or, if the metaphor be preferred, the notion of sins of the flesh is like a bandage which hoodwinks people, and makes them incapable of finding rational solutions for the problems of the sex life—such as birth control, the status of courtesans (called in the Judeo-Christian vocabulary “the problem of prostitution”), the sexual education of children, etc. The wearing of this bandage over the eyes explains the quasi-religious frenzy with which turbulent leagues and excited individuals bait those who engage in sexual acts outside the field of rigid and lifelong monogamy, explains the zeal of the Nosey Parkers who are always ready to spy upon and interfere with private life.

If modern western civilisation, which is so prone to plume itself upon its achievements, is, as regards sex matters, in a state of crass ignorance and appalling barbarism, this is largely due to the ban which official Christianity has for ages placed upon the study of sexual problems, and in part to the condemnation and persecution of sexual practices. The pith and marrow of the evil has been the theory of carnal sin—assuredly the most hideous error which the doctrinaires have ever imposed upon man.

This theory of carnal sin, poisoning western civilisation, has given rise to a sort of sexual paranoia. Salomon Reinach (*Lettres à Zoé*, vol. ii, p. 19) quotes an utterance of Johannes Scotus Erigena to the effect that “the leading aim of mankind must be to restore the unity which was broken by original sin, giving rise, among other miseries, to the distinction between the sexes”. This paranoia explains the anti-sexual tragi-comedy which is played before our eyes day after day. With its unceasing claims it dictates anti-sexual encyclicals, pastoral letters, authoritarian declamations, the activities of purity societies. Those afflicted with this mental disorder cannot rest, nor allow others to rest. Thus we read: “In this respect we have gravely failed to do our duty by adolescent youth. We have tried arbitrary repression, instead

of relying on persuasion. Society has declared that intimate relations with young girls are 'bad', and must on no account be tolerated. But no adequate reasons, convincing to a sound judgment, have been adduced in support of this contention. Without such reasons, without having convinced the judgments we cannot expect to restrain or guide such powerful vital currents."

Now the poisoned spring whence all this morbid education flows is the doctrine of carnal sin. Bertrand Russell, in *Marriage and Morals* (p. 215), shows to what depths of folly it may lead persons otherwise regarded as intelligent: "I know men, by no means old, who, when in infancy they were seen touching a certain portion of their body, were told with the utmost solemnity: 'I would rather see you dead than doing that.' " Again: "The notion of sins of the flesh has done harm which has hitherto been hushed up, harm which begins in early childhood and lasts through life. . . . This guilt complex makes a man coarse, awkward, and inhibited in his love-affairs, and often renders him incapable of being so outspoken as to discover what a woman thinks of him. . . . In women, on the other hand, frigidity is a point of pride, until physical reserves and resistances impose barriers upon freedom and true intimacy."

The notion of carnal sin is likewise responsible for certain institutions and customs whose ludicrousness we overlook because they are so familiar. English novels bristle with references to the chaperon who must watch over the conduct and the "safety" of girls and young women when they are in men's company, playing the same part as the now obsolete Spanish duenna. The presence of the chaperon is considered a safeguard even if she goes to sleep. But the interest lies in the idea hidden behind the "chaperon" façade. What is dreaded should the chaperon be absent is always the same thing; "the worst" might happen—sexual indulgence on the part of a man and a woman left to a tête-à-tête. In this connexion we find a quaint anecdote in

Félix de Grand'Combe's *Tu vas en Angleterre* (p. 82). The author tells us that girl students of the women's colleges at the universities may ask young men to tea in their bed-sitting-rooms, provided that the divan on which the girl sleeps is, for the occasion, trundled into the passage. Here we have a candid avowal of the temptations upon which puritan fancy runs riot, and also of the bland puritan ignorance of the way in which these precautions might be defied. But in truth here the bed, like the chaperon, is only a symbol which discloses a too vivid and tortured imagination.

On the other hand we can grasp why, in countries uncontaminated by the doctrine of sin, men and women seem to breathe more freely, to live less constrainedly, to have a loftier and more assured happiness. It follows that the introduction of this idea among peoples which have hitherto been happy enough to know nothing of anti-sexual paranoia is a crime against mankind and must be strenuously resisted. When we note how enviable is the mental condition of young persons who, during the formative years, have heard nothing about "sin", and when we see how beneficial are the effects of such ignorance upon the bodily and mental balance of races whose primal innocence in such respects has never been clouded by thoughts of original sin, we cannot but be incensed that this disastrous kind of instruction should have been forcibly imposed upon distant peoples. We think of the unfortunate consequences in the South Sea Islands and many other places where the authorities have connived at the activities of missionaries. When western governments inflict their own anti-sexual policy upon other races, they do ill, for this policy has proved disastrous in the West, whereas the contrary plan has ministered to the happiness of many nations. It is anti-sexual fanaticism which reaps the harvest of these evil deeds. Those who are emancipated from the trammels of the doctrine of sin should become "missionaries" in the inverse sense, by striving to

amend the anti-sexual civilisation of the West in the light of the positive achievements of other civilisations.

We must not fail to recognise that lay morality, despite its air of independence and its parade of rationalism, has not succeeded in freeing itself from the religious notion of sin, and is still enslaved by this fallacious concept. Our moralists have not yet been able to study the sexual act in its purely physiological and hygienic aspects, but keep it (so to say) under police supervision and stigmatise it as debauchery whenever it transgresses official frontiers. They still have to learn science, appreciate freedom, and forget Mosaic prejudices. For even though they have discarded Hebrew metaphysics, they are dominated by outworn Hebrew standards of conduct, and give the impression of being as ignorant of physiology as were the writers of the Pentateuch. The strait-lacedness of Christians is curiously reminiscent of the obligations of old-time Judaism. French chroniclers relate that when the "rosière" of Salency was crowned, her family had to conform strictly to the anti-sexual code and to the rules of Christian marriage. (The origination of the ceremonial is ascribed to St. Médard, who was Bishop of Noyon during the reign of Clovis.) According to Madame de Genlis, as quoted by L. de Labessade in *Le droit du seigneur*, p. 206: "Not only must the rosière herself be a person whose conduct was irreproachable, but her father, her mother, her brothers, her sisters, and her collateral relatives for the last four generations must be equally spotless; she would be rejected if there was the slightest blemish in any of their reputations." We cannot but admire this reliance upon village gossip, and the fortitude of the candidates willing to expose themselves to such scrutiny. But we should do well to remember that, as regards chastity, like demands were made by the Hebrews of old, and that in one case as in the other they were the outcome of the monstrous idea that, thanks to original sin, a physiological action could produce a lasting stain. Henri Duvernois wrote:

"A woman is created for one man and one only. When she does not meet this man, intimate contact with any other man will soil her." Here we have the essential doctrine of sin, of smirch, of tarnish, penned, without a smile, by a twentieth-century psychologist. Psychology, biology, physiology, organic chemistry, logic as well, all go by the board in deference to the notion of the illegitimacy of the sexual act, as graven by false doctrine upon the intelligence of even our most subtle contemporaries. Need we wonder at the foggy condition of minds less acute?

As Dr. Bauer remarks, our system of sexual morality has been petrified by ecclesiastical councils. That is why it is the expression of the doctrine of sin, and at the same time bears the stamp of the authority which these bodies claimed to exercise over human thought. But what are we to prognosticate as to the future of a civilisation which (with a straight face) describes itself as ultra-moral because it has repudiated and condemned a physiological act? The claim is grotesque. Our civilisation is stricken thereby with mortal sickness, at the very time when, in an expanded world, it is coming into clash with rationalist conceptions reawakening after prolonged slumber, or with pro-sexual communities which it would like to convert to its own crazy standards when the attempt can only arouse mistrust and enmity.

Modern sexual life, as it has issued from two millenniums of Christian dictatorship, is indeed profoundly immoral. This immorality is not of the kind supposed by the anti-sexual "moralists". The immorality from which we suffer is falsehood, hypocrisy, and cowardice—with all of which vices we are drenched. Married couples clandestine in their infidelity and ending by murder, parents and children incessantly wrangling about the limits of authority, brains disordered by continence, characters embittered by a window-dressing chastity which is belied by dreams and by auto-erotism, sexual acts performed as furtively as theft, the lying utterances of those who publicly condemn what



they secretly practice, servility in face of the increasing violence of purity-fanatics, the outrageous persecution of those who lead a natural sex life, the deliberate blunting of our intelligence when we come to examine the code of sexual morals—combine to make our civilisation a scandal and a hissing. But these also are the abuses which the champions of sexual legitimacy and sexual freedom are never weary of attacking.

It is not necessary to insist here how different are the conditions (for one who seeks enfranchisement from the anti-sexual taboo) produced by a rationalist trend, on the one hand, or a religious trend, on the other. This is now a matter of common knowledge, and the difference between the respective trends concerns both origin and method. Rarely, however, is the choice between them deliberately willed, for early associations and training are apt to be overwhelmingly influential.

Confining ourselves to the Semitic system, we may infer that the definitive rejection of the primitive theory of sin is essential to the acquirement of the moral anaesthesia in matters of sex which (in conformity with the principle of legitimacy) we regard as the basis of sexual enfranchisement. The fact is that the Judeo-Christian doctrine of sin, and the theory that sexual acts are legitimate, are mutually exclusive. As concerns sex and its manifestations, no one in whom there persist vestiges of an uncompromising anti-sexual metaphysic can have the freedom, the familiar acquaintance, the unqualified recognition which can render sexual activities permanently beneficial. Morality calls for the same tolerance as does religion, for no more than religion is morality a science. If it were, it would not vary so much as it does with time and place. But what modern psychologist can be surprised to find that the Christian, for whom the sexual act is fundamentally sinful, and the rationalist for whom it is a physiological manifestation as natural and desirable as eating and drinking, are radically

different in their sexual ideas and actions? Who can possibly conciliate the mechanistic theory of legitimate sexual intercourse (the theory which is the defensive armour of the sexual reformers' system) with the dogma of sin? As concerns these rival views there is no scope even for the sophistry with which people sometimes try to reconcile science and faith.

*Subjective Acquisition of Sexual Freedom.*—Beyond question everyone of normal intelligence, and determined to think for himself, ought to scrutinise no matter what taboo for its justifications, and to disregard it if it cannot provide them. But this is by no means always done, the reason being that taboos appeal far more to feeling (atavistic feeling, in general) than to intelligence.

Sticking closer to the point, we may say that anyone who has grasped the persistent importance of sexual acts throughout life, and has realised the risks which arise from a faulty interpretation of sexual phenomena, will have to admit that it is of the first importance for persons who wish to guide their lives intelligently to take a definite line upon this question. Instead of obeying blindly and without independent thought traditional guides who are apt to contradict one another, he should, deliberately and with full awareness, adopt a sexual policy of his own which will enable him to regulate his life in accordance with principles he considers sound. Those who do not succumb to inertia or to an invincible leaning towards the acceptance of stereotyped opinions will feel that it is essential to define their attitude towards the problems of sex.

This is not always easy. We know, of course, that we have nothing to learn from those who, repudiating the inferences of the system of sexual legitimacy, prefer to accept timeworn anti-sexual prohibitions. Our ship and theirs are driven in different directions by different winds. What we must do, then, is to ascertain the directives which those will accept who have adopted the principle of legitimacy

as their starting-point and sole trustworthy guide on their sexual course. We shall ask ourselves the important question : What plain rules will enable us to follow a line in accordance with our convictions and to make no secret of these? A necessary part of our ethical research will be to deduce the consequences of our main principle, and to discover how the adept of the principle of sexual legitimacy will behave in private and in social life.

*Guiding Principles of Sexual Freedom: A. Formal Adhesion to the Principle of the Legitimacy of Sexual Acts.*—A convinced advocate of legitimacy will refuse to compromise with the prohibitionists. In private and in social life he will want to cull all the fruits of his enfranchisement. We should make it clear to him at once that, however deliberate his choice, it will be worth nothing unless it is unqualified. His first duty will be to avow himself in favour of sexual legitimacy with as much firmness and pride as the devotee of continence shows in avowing chastity. For, when he has claimed exemption from the martyrdom of anti-natural disciplines, and at bottom has accepted the principle of legitimacy, what will happen if he refrains from flying what have now become his colours? He will be pusillanimous and enervated. Throughout his weary life he will suffer from having to assume a hypocritical pose, while at the same time he will be a target for the shafts of the prohibitionists, who will refuse his right to the satisfactions he wants and the consideration he claims, for they will be set upon frightening him and upon winning him back to their side. His shiftiness will expose him to the contempt of both parties. In this life of ours, those only are strong who take a strong line. Since his sincere belief is that the doctrine of sexual legitimacy is reasonable, logical, and scientific, how can he excuse himself for not publicly adopting it with all its consequences?

The acceptance of the legitimacy of sexual acts implies acceptance of the mechanistic theory of these acts. I need

not renew the proof of this now, nor recapitulate the close and fruitful relations between sexual legitimacy and the principle of self-determination. But why not frankly admit that the wholehearted acceptance and practice of sexual freedom is, in the extant chaotic condition of sexual morality, the only safeguard against hesitation and uncertainty? This is equally important subjectively, for one who wishes to liberate himself in the domain of sexual practice; and objectively, for one who has to form an opinion on the conduct of others or to take a definite attitude as concerns the critical problems of the region where sexuality borders on social institutions. These questions will come up for consideration in due course under the head of ethics. The solutions that derive from the doctrine of sexual legitimacy will, obviously, be very different from those of the champions of sexual taboo and from the decalogues they have crudely rewritten. But whatever conclusions we reach, they will depend upon the consistent application of the mechanical theory of sex; and that is why they demand the formal and considered adhesion of those who accept that theory.

*B. Subjective Conquest of Repression and the Censorship.*—We shall not be surprised to find that everyone who is sure of the profoundly erroneous character of conventional sexual morality, will shun the psychical tricks issuing from that morality and leading to prohibitionism and neurosis. Repression and the censorship, which have been so clearly elucidated by Freud, are for the mental and psychological life what a ligature would be for the circulation; and for one who has adopted the new discipline, liberation from these restrictions is of the first importance.

We are, I need hardly say, concerned with a work of self-reform which cuts very deep and is radically opposed to the conventions of prohibitionist sexual life, but it is strictly psychical and voluntary. We have agreed that repression and the censorship are artificial and therefore

non-natural processes, lingering and coercive. They are certainly powerful. But they build a colossus that has feet of clay. The fruits of non-natural instruction are rapidly dispelled by the demonstration of natural truths. When the sexual taboo is no longer linked with feelings of fear and guilt, or supported (as it usually is) by an appeal to super-natural sanctions, its grip is feeble and it is not lasting. On the other hand the sincere advocates of sexual legitimacy, in their eager wish for sexual freedom, have in adopting their new principle shown a remarkable indifference to dogmatic bogeys. Freed from fear, they are freed from the taboo. As soon as they are liberated from the taboo, they need only make a trifling effort and one that harmonises with their deepest convictions, in order to achieve the conquest of repressions and the censorship which are the instruments of the taboo. They ought to effect, and usually do effect, this conquest very speedily, for it is a corollary of a thoughtful and firm acceptance of the principle of sexual legitimacy.

We are often surprised to find how quickly this second stage, that of liberation from repression and the censorship, is got through. Do you remember *Lady Chatterley*? "She would have expected a woman to die of shame; but what happened was that shame was dead." Experienced psychoanalysts, however, are not surprised. They will often have had occasion to notice the rapid disappearance of repression in cases which badly informed alienists would describe as morbid. Regression to infantile (that is to say, natural) sexuality occurs, we are told, because the will is enfeebled, and no longer on guard—as in dreams, delirium, and illness. When these "policemen", repression and the censorship, are dismissed by a deliberate act of will, on the ground that there is no need for them, the result is the same. Sexual freedom becomes the rule; is as vigorous in the adult as it was in the infant, being frankly and simply in touch with nature, but now enlightened by a logical and rational

demonstration (that of the legitimacy of sexual acts) aided by hygienic considerations, respect for the equal rights of others, due allowance for private and social privileges—all matters to be discussed by and by.

*C. Disappearance of the Notions of Sexual Immorality and Sexual Shame.*—A normal outcome of the conquest of repression and the censorship is the disappearance of the artificially induced sense of shame, unknown in other animals than man and unknown in early childhood, but a product of anti-sexual doctrines, for those who promulgate such doctrines labour unceasingly to inculcate shame in respect of the genital organs, and of all sexual acts, manifestations, and allusions.

Primitives satisfy their natural needs in public without either embarrassment or shame, this applying just as much to the gratification of sexual desire as of hunger or thirst. One of the leading aims of western civilization has been to overcome this shamelessness as regards coitus no less than as regards urination and defaecation. This induces mental conflicts. Where does the truth lie? Those who plume themselves on being civilised declare it is on their side. "What?" they say. "Would you have us return to the ways of savages? This would mean the scrapping of all that distinguishes us from them, of all the acquirements of civilised man, of that which makes him a superior being." Here we must take exception; for the question at issue is whether there is anything "superior" in having made (fruitless) war upon natural actions stigmatised as "ignoble", in having created categories of noble and ignoble which do not exist in nature. The question must be faced. And when we see that these differentiations, these discriminations (pushed to an extreme in the Judeo-Christian system), have rendered the peoples that are proud of having established them far more unhappy than those to which they are unknown, we are entitled to ask whether a civilisation can be called successful when it does not aim at happiness, fails to ensure happiness, actually

destroys happiness and causes unhappiness. We shall be satisfied that our question is well formulated when we recall that Christianity, which is responsible for this deplorable state of affairs, has no interest in the worldly happiness of its devotees, even condemns worldly happiness as likely to lead to the forfeit of heavenly bliss, and actively tries to hinder its diffusion. Large sections of mankind seem to have taken the wrong path. Enough, moreover, to note how much better balanced and how much more contented are the Mongoloid peoples which actively pursue happiness in this world, for we shall then realise what our own mis-directed westerners might have made of their lives. Aldous Huxley points out that shame as regards the body and its doings was invented by the Christians. "Shame is an artificial acquirement." They invented shame "much as the tailors of Savile Row have declared that it is bad form to wear brown boots with a black coat." Again, we have the type of western girl like Isabelle in *Les confessions de J. J. Bouchard* (p. 85). Turned out by the thousand, having deliberately entered upon a sexual intrigue, "she weeps bitterly for half an hour swearing that she will never let the man touch her, and sticks to that resolution for two or three days". Here we can trace the influence of careful training in repression, associated with religious fear, in those who have had a Judeo-Christian training, of the punishment that will follow "sin". Such types are unknown in civilisations where sexual freedom prevails; they seem incredible, and are regarded as psychopathic or demented.

On the other hand one who has wholeheartedly accepted the principle of legitimacy will lead a full, natural, and happy sexual life, free from obsessions and anxieties. He will proudly deny the prohibitionists' right to tax him with immorality, and rejoins by accusing them of ignorance. He needs no effort to rid himself of the idea of sexual immorality, his enfranchisement in this respect having been the spontaneous outcome of his faith in legitimacy. The

two notions go hand in hand, for he regards sexual acts as legitimate precisely because they are beyond good and evil. His mind is at ease from the moment that he has conquered repression and the censorship.

But the artificial sentiment of shame derives from the false belief disseminated by the prohibitionists, that sexual acts are illegitimate and immoral. He who has shed this belief will no longer be ashamed of any sexual act simply because it is sexual. One of the last efforts for sexual enfranchisement must therefore be that which will banish all traces of the artificial sentiment of shame—an energetic and persistent effort in the opposite sense to the effort which created shame. It will be well within the power of those who have fully realised the truth of sexual legitimacy, for the only shame known to such persons will be the shame of having misunderstood nature. The effort of liberation will spontaneously follow the acceptance of the notion of legitimacy, so that the sequel will come smoothly. If we remember how artificial is the sentiment of sexual shame, and how much even those who have not yet been won over to the doctrine of legitimacy would like to regain naturalness in this respect, it will be obvious that fictive shame can readily give place to natural “shamelessness”. Consider, finally, that at certain times and in certain societies this feeling of shame was unknown; and that among ourselves, here and now, we more and more often encounter, in private or in public (the latter, among nudists), men and women totally free from it—then you will understand with what comparative ease and speed those will be able to rid themselves of it who have at their disposal the incomparable weapon of a belief in sexual legitimacy which is so perfectly fitted to dispel the incoherent and artificial sentiment of sexual shame.

Note, moreover, that there can be no profound knowledge of sexual pleasure, nor yet the possibility of unrestricted delight, so long as vestiges of sexual shame stand



in the way. Experts in the sexual life and great lovers in general have always divested themselves of shame that they might enjoy to the full, with an artistic delight. They began by ridding themselves and their partners of shame. The essential thing is, not to feel hampered or degraded by the performance of a sexual act, but, being thoroughly convinced of its legitimacy, to do it frankly and without regret. Enfranchisement is not complete until one has ceased to feel the slightest trace of shame in performing a sexual act, however publicly. Among peoples which have not been contaminated by the doctrine of sin, we find perfect facility of accomplishment and a condition of absolute serenity after the event. There, no doubt, these valuable possibilities are safeguarded by an environment which knows nothing of intentional depreciation, or carping criticism, or disquiet due to a wrong-headed metaphysic; but individuals in our own part of the world could provide such an environment if they were sufficiently courageous and had a steadfast will. Then the individual actions and the social State would react on one another. Why need we shirk the endeavour when we stand to gain by dispersal of the nightmare resulting from two thousand years of anti-sexual dictatorship? To those who, having rejected the taboo, boldly recognise the legitimacy of any kind of sex relations between consenting parties—this outlook in its purity (or, if you prefer, its physiological crudity) becomes so simple, so natural, so normal, so much a matter of course, that they henceforward regard as ridiculous, as a danger to the public peace, as a threat to the welfare of mankind, the whole arsenal of prudery, anathema, denunciation, and scandal which is at the disposal of anti-sexual policy. They are stupefied when they contemplate the morbid detestation which has transformed easy and beneficial actions into misfortunes and catastrophes individual or social. It seems extraordinary to them that anyone should wish to stigmatise the genital organs, or sexual acts, as immodest and im-

proper. No doubt the existence of this stigma explains the disasters and the tragedies brought about by censorship and repression. Free spirits, however, will henceforward regard such views as indications of paranoia or some other form of mental derangement. When it has become incomprehensible how the display of a sexual organ, which seems to them a simple and ordinary thing, can appear catastrophic to the victims of taboo, an unbridgeable gulf will have opened between them and the "purity fanatics". But manifestly we must be in one camp or the other, just as we must accept or reject religious creeds.

The champions of sexual legitimacy and sexual freedom will therefore denounce the irrationality of those who cry shame when some particular part of the body is displayed or used. So strange an aberration will this seem that it will be regarded as a sort of hereditary mania in the very persons who believe their strange sentiments to be a mark of excellence. We contest, we repudiate, this claim of superiority, just as we refuse to admit that the free and ample performance of sexual acts betokens moral inferiority.

*D. Sexual Enjoyment as a Natural and fundamentally Avowable Pleasure.*—In conformity with the principles just enunciated, those who proclaim the legitimacy of sexual pleasure will wish intimate sex relations to be frankly restored to their normal place in everyday life. There will be nothing shame-faced about this attitude, nor will those who adopt it accept the position of licensed beggars. They want to be able to act and speak without restraint. Having deliberately espoused the cause of sexual freedom, they will not be inclined to mask their championship, to pretend that they do not advocate it, or to keep their activities in the shade. They consider themselves exponents of a true doctrine, fully entitled to back one another in striving for a place in the sun.

When thus engaged, they will merely be reviving the tradition of our forefathers. Like the ancients, contemporary

Oriental, and South Sea islanders, our own western forebears were far from being mealy-mouthed or backward in effecting, justifying, and vaunting their amorous encounters. They took it as a matter of course that, having done their daily work as best they could on behalf of the interests of the city or the State, they should be able to relax as they pleased and to seek sexual pleasure wherever they could find it. Many of them delighted to frequent courtesans or *hetairae*, and made no secret of what they did. Before the days of the puritan terror, there was much more frankness about private relations between men and women. Continence in sexual matters was not considered a necessary appanage of official position. The head of the State, say the bachelor president of a Republic who was elected for a term of five, six, or seven years, was not expected to live like a monk, to make a parade of chastity, to have no light-of-loves—under pain of being accused of debauchery or dissoluteness should he transgress. Those who sat in the seats of the mighty were not asked to add sexual abstinence to the other exacting qualities demanded of them. But they unquestionably worked no less effectively for that, and public affairs were quite as well conducted as they are where the puritan code is in force.

The victory of our views will lead to the re-establishment of sexual freedom in private life, and we are entitled to declare this one of the necessary consequences of the doctrine of the legitimacy of sexual acts. Those who espouse the doctrine regard it as their duty—by no means a painful duty, though its performance may at first make extensive claims on their energies—to assert their freedom as against prohibitionists on the rampage. They must show, both by word and by deed, that, far from sexual acts being either unavowable or immoral, such acts hold a high and unconcealed place in their lives. Without being provocative, they must be firm. To the puritan offensive, which is incessantly directed against sex and aims at imposing abstinence upon

all, the champions of sexual freedom will reply by a refusal which, like an inviolable door, will block the advance of the prohibitionists, will disperse their forces, will annihilate them. This attitude, besides furnishing the adept with his rule of life, will set an example on behalf of the system of freedom as against the prohibitionism which others may prefer.

Such a position is easy to understand. At long last one can say that there is no pleasure more frankly avowable than the pleasures of sex, which are perfectly natural; whereas the artificial enjoyments of alcoholic liquors, gambling, tobacco, and various other habit-forming drugs, are more dangerous, much less agreeable, much less to be commended than those of the sexual act for which the supreme anathema is reserved. If such a gradation of values is wrongheaded and illogical, is a moral confusion which rationalists will perforce discountenance, how will it be possible for those who are convinced advocates of sexual legitimacy and sexual freedom to sell the pass through cowardice or indifference? How can we ask them to content themselves with the vain satisfaction of having personally adopted such principles, while hiding their acceptance of them and masking the firmness of their adhesion? No, they will loudly proclaim their convictions; will repudiate the champions of taboo; unceasingly declare sexual gratification to be what they truly think it, worthy of all esteem, and no less dignified than abstention. This will be a manifestation of the energy with which they hope to ensure the triumph of their doctrine.

More and more they will find that no one will look at them askance. People are beginning to understand that chastity is not a mark of intelligence, being either the outcome of frigidity, or else of repression and of anti-sexual conventions. The latter are the more usual cause, and to accept them uncritically, without adverse reaction, without demanding their warrant, is a sign of stupidity. The "modest"

young women who are the darlings of ecclesiastics should be considered waste products by anyone who understands life in general and the sexual life in particular. They are so considered in pro-sexual societies, where men's attention is concentrated upon forthcoming and ardent women, this meaning upon those who sexually are most desirable. Even under modern "civilised" conditions we usually find that men who have revised the notion of repression and have plumbed the shallowness of anti-sexual conventions, are repelled rather than attracted by "modest" girls. That perhaps is why, nowadays, we do not see so many of such "white geese", their scarcity being due to a growing abandonment of anti-sexual standards.

Mankind needs its pleasures, its amusements, above all in these times of overwork and nervous stress. Sociologists are in general agreement about this, and endeavour to promote "distractions". The idea is not new, the parable of the unstrung bow being of ancient date. Sexual enjoyment is the most natural, the healthiest, the most highly prized of all relaxations. Among its advantages are that it is easily obtained, without elaborate preparations; and that it is by no means costly. The institution of marriage, which provides the lasting possibility of sexual pleasure, has been a partial recognition of these truths. But to seek this pleasure exclusively along such conventional lines is to restrict it unduly, instead of giving it the unstinted development which can alone provide the ample advantages of perpetually renewable sexual delight as a remedy for the evils of social life.

Thus to regard sexual acts as unqualifiedly avowable; to demand for them, not mere tolerance, but respect; to deny that artificial continence is in any way morally superior to sexual gratification; to proclaim sexual legitimacy in all one's words and all one's deeds—these are the essential rules of life for a declared champion of sexual legitimacy and sexual freedom; and all the more essential because in

default of them there can be no hope of securing, either in the private or in the social sphere, that state of sexual freedom which is our desire, our aim, and our right.

*E. Sexual Acts and Human Dignity.*—The acceptance of the legitimacy of sexual acts carries with it, perforce, a rejection of the claim made by the apostles of taboo, that man and woman gain “dignity” by renouncing sexual enjoyment. This means, of course, sexual enjoyment of kinds forbidden by the taboo. The very formulation suffices to show how tendentious is the claim that some peculiar type of human dignity can attach to the repudiation of the sexual act; for this pseudo-dignity cannot be given by wholesale and unqualified repudiation (which would make the reproduction of the species impossible), but only by restriction of the performance of the act to conditions decreed by the prohibitionists. This consideration throws a strong light on the weakness of the argument. It shows us that the prohibitionists do not mean that the dignity of which they speak derives from complete sexual abstinence, but only from abstinence under the particular conditions prescribed by the taboo. In other words, those persons are “dignified” who respect the taboo. Here we reach the core of anti-sexual policy, where it has close traditional relations with primitive prohibitions.

For those who have accepted the principle of sexual legitimacy, sexual gratification (whether reproduction is or is not desired) is a simple physiological act devoid of moral significance, and can never impair the dignity of persons who obtain it by mutual consent and without violence. There is no more dignity or lack of dignity in undertaking it or abstaining from it than there is in choosing the dishes of one’s dinner. It is a matter of private physiology and personal hygiene; and any advice thrust upon another as to the way in which he or she should indulge sexually ought to be regarded as unwarrantable, no less than is interference with individual predilections in the matter

of flavours or scents. We must keep at arms' length those who would stigmatise John or Mary as improper or "low" because they enjoy themselves sexually in this way or that, just as we should make short work of anyone who should denounce John or Mary as immoral for preferring a boiled egg to a poached.

This leads me to emphasise once more how futile it seems, to us who have accepted the principle of legitimacy, that anyone should advocate shame or chastity. These conditions are neither natural nor necessary, and in Chapter VIII of *Sex Life and Sex Ethics* we studied how the sexual repression to which they lead gives rise to various neuroses. They supply dangerous pretexts to fanatics who want to diffuse their doctrinaire or religious prejudices and to interfere with private life. We have excellent reasons, therefore, for disputing the claim to "dignity" put forward on behalf of shame and chastity.

Some women believe that shame gives them additional charm, and use it for a while only as a weapon which they delight in abandoning when they surrender to the victor. Let us avoid exaggeration. Modesty being artificial, and arising only in a certain stage of civilisation, is not necessarily prized by everyone. In other societies, the diplomatic exhibitions of shame made so often by civilised women of the West would have been taken amiss, and would have repelled instead of attracting. Nay, they often fail to prove alluring among our own people. He who delights in this parade of feminine modesty must be impregnated with the theory of sin, assured that the sexual act is fundamentally immoral, an adept of the prohibitionist faith. To one who holds other views, who champions sexual freedom and considers sexual intercourse wholly legitimate because beyond good and evil, modesty is absurd, incomprehensible, an undesirable prejudice. That is why many men take no interest in what are called virtuous women, and, to the great indignation of these, prefer to frequent women who

make no bones about granting their favours. This is not simply because such men desire to gain their end with the least possible effort, but because they have a natural liking for partners who share their views and talk the same language as themselves.

In like manner the anti-sexual moralists are often astonished and enraged to find that a "vicious" girl has more male admirers than a "virtuous" one. Yet this is easy to understand as soon as we have scrapped question-begging terminology. It means nothing more than that many men find a girl more glamorous when she has lively and awakened sexual sensibilities than they would if she were dull and torpid; and that, as regards sexual relations, the former type gives more prospect of pleasure than the latter. This is absolutely normal. Had not the sexual taboo done so much to pervert our feelings, the sexually alert woman would be universally more appreciated than the woman who has (or feigns to have) no interest in sex, since the former's sexual dispositions have blossomed in a thoroughly natural way. We shall see that this is what actually happened in societies franker and more consistent than our own. Conversely, many women make much of a man who has the reputation of being a "bad lot" in sexual matters, for they know he must be one who has said good-bye to shame. They are also aware that, since he is a person with ample experience, they will not be troubled by the difficulties which are apt to complicate the initial stages of an intimate relationship.

The definitive rejection of any link between human dignity and sex relations (of whatever kind) will enable us to shed one of the most clinging of the prejudices to which anti-sexual doctrines have given rise—to the belief that a man shows respect for a woman by not proposing sexual intimacy. For one who knows that woman desires sexual enjoyment quite as much as does man, the notion that she can be pleased by refusing her the greatest pleasure she can



experience is one of those grotesque conceits which could only arise in the mind of a prohibitionist thoroughly accustomed to incoherent mental associations. Habit, education, and atavism have made such incoherencies so widespread, that it will not be enough to deny them point-blank, and we must carefully expose their fallacy.

One of the masterpieces of prohibitionist technique has been to persuade women that they are insulted when a man proposes sexual intercourse. Yet the pretence that to offer a woman sexual pleasure is to treat her disrespectfully shows us once more how weak and sophistical are anti-sexual arguments. The fundamental error is a false association of ideas. Two things which have nothing in common are mentally linked. Respect is based upon the esteem we have for a person, upon the physical or moral value we ascribe, and it is always tinged with admiration or the tender emotion. What has such respect got to do with the sexual act, once we have come to regard this as physiological, natural, normal, legitimate, and avowable? Are we to suppose that only when we believe it to be "sinful", do we show disrespect for a woman by proposing sexual intimacy, since the proposal implies that we think her capable of abandoning her religious principles? Possibly that is what the prohibitionists mean; one might almost say "probably", recalling that in countries which have not come under Judeo-Christian influence no one would dream of regarding such a proposal as disrespectful. But in that case we are concerned with the implications of a particular creed. The formulation has no general value, and is devoid of interest for those who do not profess that creed.

It cannot be denied that, owing to atavism, a fair number of persons are still inclined to hold fast to this sort of respect for women, saying that to it we owe the improvement in our manners, good form, and a veneer of politeness which is perhaps rather finical but certainly desirable. Can we accept such a view without forsaking our principle of sexual

legitimacy? Would not that involve our agreeing that an amorous advance of any kind must necessarily be disrespectful? In our view, one who proposes sexual intimacy to a woman pays her a compliment, for he shows that he sets a high value upon and has a great need for her physical and mental charms; that he considers her seductive, lovable, intelligent, in a word eminently desirable. If we who are groping for a philosophy have not got off the track in our use of words, we ought to admit that a woman whom we do not long to possess, a woman whom we can leave forgotten in a corner as we might leave an umbrella, has good reason to complain of our indifference, our lack of interest, our disrespect.

A man shows a woman that he wishes her to become his partner in sexual enjoyment. She may answer, "No, you do not attract me"; or, having already a lover to whom for the time being she wishes to restrict her amours, she may say, "I am not free." But if she flares up and replies, "You don't respect me", and seriously considers herself insulted, she is one who has been so much perverted by prohibitionist prejudices that there is nothing left for the man but to withdraw, his ardour presumably quenched by the revelation of her prudery. For the rest, the woman, the person chiefly concerned, since she is a prude, will not take this withdrawal amiss. Being ugly, undesirable, neglected, she will (by an unhappy sort of compensation) pride herself upon the respect thus shown her—when it is really nothing more than the lamentable indifference of the male. This rag of consolation will enable her to give free rein to her temperamental jealousy, so that she can carp at the good-looking women who are much sought after by men. She charges them with allowing themselves to be treated with very little respect, and acrimoniously contrasts her own vaunted dignity with the "unworthy" attitude of happier women. The hatred which gnaws at the hearts of wallflowers among women has always powerfully reinforced

the vehement attacks of the prohibitionists upon sexual freedom.

In modern Occidental women the frank pleasure which primitive women find in being sexually coveted has been replaced by a demand that amorous advances shall be made in due and decorous form. During the voyage to the land of tender delights, no port of call must be missed. The lover must advance from the look to the sigh, from the sigh to a pressure of the hand, from a pressure of the hand to a declaration. The proper ritual must be observed, and if her lover fails to observe it, the lady feels slighted. Between immediate and open acceptance of sexual pleasure, on the one hand, and this complicated code in which people speak of anything except that which is really wanted, on the other, there is as great a gulf fixed as between the nudity of the primitive and the sophisticated wardrobe of a modern great lady.

There is no ground for ceasing to respect a woman who has given herself unrestrainedly, the woman, that is to say, with whom one has "proved all love's pleasures". Nothing should make either the woman or her partner feel that she is a whit less respectable. What should arise in such a case is mutual satisfaction in having shared a natural and legitimate pleasure, and reciprocal gratitude for giving it to one another. (As the reader will learn later, I do not except the courtesan.)

In the name of the doctrine of legitimacy, we must strongly censure both the man who feels contempt for the woman who has given herself to him, and the woman who is in any way disposed to think less of herself on account of her surrender. They are victims of the atavistic theory of sin. The same is true of the sensitive woman who is foolish enough to dread becoming a mere instrument of pleasure, for she has forgotten that the sex relation is one between two equals, and that if she is an instrument of pleasure for the man, the man is also an instrument of

pleasure for her. Equality of roles forbids the intrusion of contempt.

We must therefore lodge a demurrer against the ingenious demand put forward by some of the puritans that "men ought to treat all women as they treat their mothers or their sisters", this meaning that they are to be treated as persons with whom sexual relations are on principle forbidden. That may be true in the realm of prohibitionist theory, but it is unquestionably false for those who have accepted the doctrine of sexual legitimacy. A professor of social hygiene writes: "When you think of woman, think of your mother, your sister, your betrothed, and then you will not talk nonsense." (*Sic.*) Such proposals, however well-meant, show that those who make them are victims of the doctrine of sin, and cannot think of sexual acts except in the light of that doctrine. They pay no heed to the desires of the women who want sexual pleasure, claim it as their right, and await its offer. Besides, such formulas betray the hopeless illogicality of anti-sexual enthusiasts. A man's mother or his sisters have not produced and cannot produce children through the nose; and the sexual indifference of a son or a brother would not be agreeable to a woman if all other men were equally indifferent. The absurdity springs from the use of half-baked phrases which deliberately ignore that in the act of copulation all have had and will have the same outlook and the same secretions—unless they are to perish of neurosis and sexual privation. We may well ask, with Henri Duvernois: "Have I broken your plaster-casts? . . . Does it afflict you so much to learn that your mother was a woman?" As regards the betrothed, T. de Félice writes gloomily in *Le protestantisme et la question sexuelle* (p. 78): "We cannot feel that respect for the betrothed is a sole and sufficient rule, for she may expect signs of affection which would not imply any lack of respect, *and might nevertheless be dangerous.*" Alas, what would become of this fragile principle of "respect for woman" in the hands of an affianced

lover who might continue to maintain the principle intact despite intimacies whose charm would not exempt them from consequences? Let us leave the decision of this matter to the ingenious minds of the defenders of the system, and, rather than follow them in their difficult speculations, let us content ourselves with holding fast to the principles of legitimacy, according to which respect shown by keeping away from a woman is fictitious.

The truth is that a natural and healthy woman regards the offer of sexual pleasure as a tribute to her charms. In societies which have not been tainted by anti-sexual prohibitionism (among primitives for instance), the traveller can easily ascertain that a woman, far from being outraged by what anti-sexual moralists style "an improper approach", regards it as an offer which tickles her vanity, an offer of pleasure which she may accept or reject as she pleases. (See *Sex Life and Sex Ethics*, pp. 61-62.) This offer made by the man seems natural and precious to the woman. If she thought her dignity in any way associated with a physiological act, she would consider it to be enhanced by the fact that, inasmuch as she is desirable and desired, she is placed in an enviable category. Can we say the same of those elderly women who, in western societies, being misshapen and no longer possible objects of desire, take advantage of the ties of marriage to go on imposing themselves upon the husbands who are fettered to them but are sick of them and incapable, in close contact, of feeling a thrill, or any other sentiment than repulsion? I shall return to the consideration of these strange results of monogamy. It will suffice for the moment to point out to the reader that when he hears talk of human dignity, he would do well to remind himself that the greatest enemies of love are lack of spontaneity and the enforced fulfilment of obligations which go against the grain.

Some imagine that sexual abstinence, or hostility to the freedom of love, is a mark of moral superiority. This view

is the outcome of confounding stereotyped doctrines of prohibition with fundamental morality. For the rationalist philosopher, superiority is shown by freeing the mind from false ideas, by finding natural and scientific solutions; and the blind adoption of a taboo devoid of logical foundation gives scant evidence of either morality or intelligence. It is significant, too, that what is called "sexual virtue" is always accompanied by puerility and poverty of spirit. We may note once more that this difference in values is found also as between philosophical doctrines, for believers and unbelievers have very little mutual respect. This proves how important it is, as concerns sexual behaviour whether public or private, to show the same neutrality as good manners demand to-day towards conflicting philosophical beliefs. Anyhow, neutrality does not mean approbation; and certainly no superiority is shown by espousing a cause that is obviously wrong-headed, even though it has the advantage of centuries of tradition.

In reality those who practice sexual freedom because they are aware that the doctrine of sexual legitimacy is sound are much finer creatures than those who boast of their abstinence; for they are able to repudiate a false convention and to restore the reign of natural and scientific truth. The adept of the doctrine of legitimacy and freedom, when he is easy-going in sexual matters, covers himself with as much credit as does the Christian who succeeds in being chaste. The former proves the strength of his rationalism; the latter, the strength of his faith. The rationalist does not find it possible to admire girls who kill themselves because they have been raped. At Salency, we are told, a village maiden, when the seigneur was too ardent in his approaches, begged her father to cut off her head that she might preserve her "honour". "The seigneur, filled with admiration for this Lucrece, took a chaplet of flowers and pressed it on her brow saying: 'Now you will wear this noble crown as a decoration for your chastity'." (L. de Labessade, *Le*

*droit du seigneur*, p. 196.) That was the origin of the famous ceremony of Salency; and that is why your daughter can become rosière.—Such is the barren precedent of the medal given nowadays to the mothers of a large family. When a natural act can lead a girl to make so extravagant a request, we are certainly entitled to speak of paranoia.

## CHAPTER III

### CONSEQUENCES OF THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF SEXUAL FREEDOM

Consequences of the Guiding Principles: A. Subjective Limits of Sexual Freedom.—B. Restriction of Sexual Acts to strictly Personal Initiative.—C. Restoration of Sexual Acts to the Domain of Private Life.—D. Society must respect all Sexual Acts held to be Legitimate.—E. Sexual Acts must once more be fitted in to the commonplaces of Daily Life.—F. Necessary Changes in the Anti-sexual Vocabulary.

*Consequences of the Guiding Principles: A. Subjective Limits of Sexual Freedom.*—The mechanistic theory according to which sexual acts have no moral complexion, has taught us that such acts are legitimate for the very reason that they are amoral and mechanistic. The practical inference from the theory is that a sexual act, of whatever kind, needs no other justification than the preferences of the persons concerned. They must know themselves, must know their tastes and leanings, choice being free and legitimate. No matter its nature, this choice can neither detract from their dignity nor ennoble them. It is a physiological realisation which is no business of any but those who choose this particular form of self-expression; and no one whose nature is different is entitled to criticise or to forbid.

There should be no stint to this liberty, which must be regarded as a necessary consequence of the guiding principles of sexual legitimacy and sexual freedom. Such limitations as may have to be imposed will depend, not upon the specific quality of the sexual acts (which is of no more moment than are the specific qualities of nutrition or respiration), but upon the general restrictions that all have to accept in the conduct of their lives, whether as individuals



or as members of a social organism which brings them into contact with others of a like kind.

As regards himself, the individual must study his sexual capacities intelligently, as he would those of any other bodily function. Hygiene, general and local, thus becomes the sole individual limit of sexual activity. Everyone of fair average education and a reasonable amount of experience can prescribe his own regime, often deciding more successfully than a doctor could decide for him. In the matter of diet, he knows when he should cry 'Enough'; knows what is beneficial, what harmful. If, though he knows, he lacks the sense and the will-power which should enable him to refuse what is bad for him, he will be punished by illness. That is no one's business but his own. We may unhesitatingly assert that the tendency of modern legislation thanks to which people are throughout life subject to governmental control as to what they may eat or drink, is disastrous and intolerable. Open-minded persons realise that this policy has suffered serious checks of late, checks which show that individual liberty cannot be violated with impunity. I think, more especially, of the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the U.S.A. (now rescinded). In an earlier work of mine, *Réflexions sur la tolérance*, I quoted the opinion of an American congressman, G. H. Tinkham of Boston, who announced the "tragic failure" of prohibition, and declared that to use penal legislation in order to regulate private life and prescribe what people should drink at their own dinner-tables, was to exceed the just powers and the moral role of government.

If the only proper course as regards the physiological manifestations of the human body is to leave people free to decide things for themselves, this freedom should include, not only eating and drinking, but whatever sexual activities the individual may feel himself or herself competent to perform. Temperance means, not the castration of desire, but its healthy satisfaction in due degree; it belongs to the

realm of hygiene, not to that of asceticism. The punishment of excess here as in other fields of hygiene is that illness dogs the footsteps of one who exceeds. We shall see later, when we come to study the diseases styled venereal, that social interference can be justified only when it takes the form of the spread of enlightenment, of far-reaching preventive measures, and of cures that are made accessible to all.

As concerns our relations to others, the limits of sexual freedom are easy to define in accordance with the general principle which governs our consciences and our modern civil and criminal codes—the principle that no one may injure or do violence to his fellows. This rule governs all human activities, and is adequate in the domain of sex as it is adequate elsewhere. Just as no violence or threat of violence may be used by a citizen to secure entrance into another's domicile, to obtain a signature, or to bring about a transfer of property, so no violence or threat of violence may be used to force a non-consenting party to join in a sexual act. Violence undermines the legitimacy of the sexual act, as it undermines that of every other; it is essential to the theory of sexual legitimacy and sexual freedom that there is no place for the use of force. But subject to this reservation, every kind of sexual act is legitimate. As soon as the free consent of a sexual partner has been secured, there is no warrant for interfering with such consent, or for cancelling it on the ground of anti-sexual prejudices which it may arouse in those who are not parties to the act.

In the sixth volume of these *Studies of Sexual Ethics*, the volume which will deal with *The State and Sexual Acts*, I shall return to this question. But I may point out, here and now, that the foregoing principles are of such general application that instances seem scarcely requisite. Besides, as far as concerns the restriction of sexual freedom by the rule which forbids force, the adepts of legitimacy are not controlled by the threats of the law, but by their lofty con-

ception of the sexual life and by their general principles, which forbid any violation of the elementary rights of others, whether in the domain of sex or elsewhere.

*B. Restriction of Sexual Acts to strictly Personal Initiative.*—A characteristic common to all sexual acts is their individuality. This is very striking in practice. We desire and we love by self-determination, regardless of others' tastes and predilections. Since we are well aware what we want, there is no region better fitted for the application of the maxim: "One takes one's pleasure where one can find it." Many kinds of sexual preference are incomprehensible to those who do not share such preferences—witness homosexual manifestations.

We infer that no one can form a sound opinion of others' sexual trends and tastes, and this emphasises what has previously been said regarding the unwarrantableness of interference. But it teaches something more.

We shall deduce, in fact, that every reasonable person, everyone convinced that sexual acts are legitimate and should be free, ought sedulously to refrain from subordinating his own sex manifestations to the control or even to the liking of others. There is no sphere of human activity in which it is more important to be oneself, and wholly so. Doubtless there are persons who, in all departments of life, prove unable to acquire self-knowledge, to decide what they like or dislike, and to form independent decisions. They cannot do anything without seeking advice. They suffer from congenital indecision, as concerns sex matters no less than others. But one capable of self-determination must remember that this power is peculiarly valuable in the sexual field.

Each of us should draw up his own balance-sheet of likes and dislikes, should know what to seek and what to avoid. His love activities will be guided by this knowledge; and, above all, he will firmly refuse to permit interference.

Yet attempts at such interference are common; and sex

manifestations are so highly individualised that we have to be ever on guard. Sensitives are often thrust back into themselves, and incline to hide their sexual leanings. In early childhood the sensitive comes into collision with his parents because he wishes to keep to himself the budding of his sexual life. Later we see the same struggle on the part of the adolescent who wants to carry on an independent sex life about which the family is to know nothing—to enjoy stolen meetings, write or receive love-letters, exchange vows of eternal fidelity. The conflict remains acute so long as young people are under the tutelage of their elders, but it diminishes as the years pass, when adulthood slowly brings emancipation. Yet many grown-ups (those over whom family interests still hold sway) have recourse to artifice in order to secure the sort of sexual life they prefer, or in order to avoid having a distasteful marriage forced on them.

Awareness of the legitimacy of sexual acts ought to be of much help in difficult circumstances. It should enable us to resist, with uncompromising firmness, any attempt on others' part to interfere in the conduct of our sexual life, whatever warrant for interference they may allege, and unhesitatingly to declare our sexual independence. Let your sex life be a secret garden with its door barred against anyone who has not been invited to enjoy the perfume of its mysterious flowers. To be its sole master, at whatever cost and against all, is one of the most valuable gifts of sexual freedom.

*C. Restoration of Sexual Acts to the Domain of Private Life.*—By a strange kink in our psychology almost everyone, apparently, finds it difficult to refrain from minding his neighbour's business. Far from understanding that much the best thing he can do is to look after his own affairs and leave his neighbour's alone, man shows an immoderate propensity to interfere in private life, to comment, to blame, and (if he can) to impose leading-strings. Consequently

he fumbles in his aspirations for freedom; and in almost all his social systems he mistakes for gains what are no more than arbitrary and in most cases useless restrictions upon personal liberty.

The history of primitive communities is overlaid by taboos. In the clans of early times, among Jewish or Arabic tribesmen, in the city-States of Greece, in the village communities of Hindustan, in ancient Rome, the Norwegian gaard, the South Sea Islands, we encounter a phenomenon whose repercussions upon human evolution have not been adequately allowed for, and which we are apt to forget when (detached and free in our great metropolitan cities) we try to understand primitive social life and the formation of atavistic notions. It is that primitives—who, in days when there was so little movement, were usually near kin or inter-allied by marriage, and forced into close association by joint struggle against hostile nature and by the organisation they had achieved in the totem—all knew one another, kept watch on one another, lived under conditions of mutual espionage. In "Our Village" no individual liberty as that term is understood by a dweller in contemporary Paris or London or in the modern international pleasure-cities, was tolerated or even conceivable. None could wander incognito in these hotbeds of unceasing chit-chat, where everyone's private life was supervised, pitilessly criticised, censored by elders or priests, forced into a stereotyped mould. People's actions were commented on to satiety. Any attempt to live one's own life or even to think for oneself was foredoomed to failure, palsied by the fierce enmity of a herd promptly informed about the most trifling deviation.

This state of social life dominated by force and gossip is represented in history by periods as significant as that of the Patriarchs or the Judges among the Jews, when the Israelite, having secured the advantages (and drawbacks) of full citizenship through circumcision, and sometimes through becoming a Nazarite, was subordinated to the

Patriarchs and watched with the utmost zeal by the whole tribe. Moses had divided his growing people into "thousands", a thousand being the minimum number of associated citizens. But the more significant division was into tribes, families, and households. The twelve tribes were the inhabitants of as many provinces; and every town was peopled by a clan, of grouped families each with its chieftain. In such an environment, private behaviour was strictly subjected to the censorship, the criticism, the supervision (often malevolent) of each and of all. For the sake of the cult (the Levite cult of the "sons of Aaron"), there must be no doubt as to the legitimacy of the priest's birth or as to the conduct of his mother. "The sons of Aaron . . . shall not take a wife that is a whore, or profane; neither shall they take a woman put away from her husband." Good behaviour, bad behaviour, birth, parentage, divorce, simmering in the stockpot of the primitive tribe where everyone knew everyone; fathers who were priests, Levites, or elders, and were tyrants even when they did not hold office; mothers who yapped at their daughters—in these conditions Jewish civilisation was a civilisation of eavesdroppers. Ancient society too often made this civilisation a prototype to copy, though it was one in which a malcontent seized by a fit of spleen or fanaticism had only to blow a blast on a ram's horn to summon devotees to the temple and clamour for an anathema upon an unfortunate who had incurred his wrath.

In some parts of Hindustan, when a woman has notoriously been unfaithful to her husband the caste becomes involved in humiliation and degradation, though it could have done nothing to prevent the "misconduct". Thereupon the panchayat or village-council assembles to take charge of the affair and decide the punishment of husband and wife. This may be a mere fine, which of course has to be paid by the indulgent husband, but sometimes the death-penalty is inflicted, in a vengeful spirit and a cruel

manner. (Sir Cecil Henry Walsh, *Crime in India*, 1930.) How greatly preferable would be a system that should teach people to refrain from any kind of interference with their neighbours' private lives.

Social life in the Greek city-States seems to have been hardly less disagreeable. After the Battle of Mantinea, in 362 B.C., the various clans of the Hellenes were perpetually quarrelling, libelled one another, and lived in a condition of permanent hostility. In Rome, from A.D. 18 onward, the Julian Law on adultery gave any meddler the right to charge a woman with this offence, even though the husband did not wish to invoke the legal authorities. The capital of the Empire, or rather the group of ruling aristocrats who combined to form the imperial court, was nothing more than a great clique in which gossip and hearsay, denunciation and calumny, desire for vengeance, again and again gave rise to scandalous trials, producing inextricable tangles which often culminated in brutal palace revolutions.

Far from reacting against these deplorable tendencies of the human mind, the ancient religions, being fundamentally intolerant, tended to strengthen them. I have already explained that, to a considerable extent, taboos were official and recurrent interferences with private life. Such was the culture medium in which were born and flourished the religions, the rituals, and the laws destined to rule the world. That was the spirit which presided over their cradle almost everywhere, in uncompromising and pitiless communities. From the primary totem or the initial family, this spirit carefully handed them down as objects of reverence to the villages of illiterates grouped around the unique, vigilant, and dictatorial authority which formed Medieval Europe, the parent of modern Europe and America. The spirit still survives, turbulent, meddlesome, tyrannical in its decrees. Incorporated in multifarious contemporary sects, it regards individual liberty as its worst enemy. Where human beings have united to form small communities, espe-

cially in country districts, they are an unedifying spectacle. Man is a wolf to man. Hear the words which Maeterlinck puts into the mouth of one of his friends concerning the village, and you will realise what the clans, the enlarged families, the lake-dwellers, and our other primitive ancestors were like: "All of them, men and women, young or old, have the usual vices of peasants. They are brutal, hypocritical, untruthful, rapacious, scandal-mongering, mistrustful, envious, inclined to snatch at illicit gains, to weave base interpretations, to flatter the strong. Necessity makes them get together for mutual aid, but at the bottom of their hearts they want to do one another a mischief whenever they can without risk. Another's misfortune provides the sole genuine pleasure known to villagers; and a great disaster—to anyone else—causes them a lastingly cherished and furtive delight. They spy on each other, are jealous, filled with mutual contempt and hatred. While still poor, and no more than farm servants, they loathe the harshness and avarice of their masters; but when they in turn have become masters they profit by experience to pay out their farm servants by bettering the instruction they have had in brutality and covetousness. I could overwhelm you with the sordid details of the meannesses, the rascalities, the tyrannies, the injustices, and the acts of spite with which the work they do in the open and peaceful countryside is inundated. Do not believe for a moment that the entrancing views of the sky, of the sea which stretches away on the other side of the church and seems like the reflection of a sky even more beautiful, a huge mirror of conscience and wisdom—do not fancy that this environment enlarges them or instructs. They have never looked at it. Their minds are filled with three or four narrow thoughts, or rather fears: dread of hunger, of force, of opinion, and of the faith; when the hour of death approaches, dread of hell. To discover what they really are, you must examine them one by one. Glance at that big fellow on the left, who looks so jolly as



he piles the sheaves. Last year his friends broke his right arm in a tavern brawl. I set the compound fracture, which was by no means an easy job, attended him for a long while until he could go back to work, and made him my pensioner for the time being. He came to my house every day, and took advantage of what he saw there, or said he had seen, to spread abroad a yarn that he had caught me in my sister-in-law's arms, and that my mother had taken to drink. He is not really a bad fellow and has no grudge against me; on the contrary, if you look at him carefully you will see that his face lights up with a smile whenever his eyes rest on me. Nor is he moved by class hatred of me as a bourgeois. Peasants long too much for riches to dislike the rich. What the man who wields the pitchfork could not understand was why I treated him for nothing. He thought I must have some ulterior object, and he was not going to be duped. More than one, richer or poorer, had spread the same scandals as he about my household—or worse. He did not regard himself as a liar, and was merely obeying the instructions of his hazy mind, poisoned by its environment. He was responding unconsciously, in spite of himself so to say, to the all-powerful longing to be malevolent. . . . But why should I trouble to elaborate a picture familiar to everyone who has lived a few years in the country?" (*La vie des abeilles*, pp. 247-249.)

The same sort of mutual supervision and constraint may be observed in many small towns. It is a matter of everyday observation in the provinces that any sign of originality arouses suspicion; so does a wish to lead an independent or even a solitary life; the inhabitants of these Little Pedlingtons usually detest one another, raise a hue and cry against anyone who fails to comply with the dictates and conventions of the herd, are horrified at such manifestations of advanced thought as may trickle in to disturb their stagnant pools, and are always ready to interfere with private life and to make public what should be left private.

In many of the Anglo-Saxon countries this inclination to comment and to blame renders life intolerable, as we may learn at large from American novels and films; while the local press shows the same tendency to pry and pester. Sexual behaviour is an inexhaustible source of salacious gossip and of juicy "scandals". Some people seem to spend all their time battenning on these stories and embellishing them—for a little calumny adds spice to the affair. Such is the character of our small towns, many of which are handed over to the tender mercies of Vigilance Societies, whose members in six months will kill more reputations than those who qualify for detention in the local prison have committed crimes. The semi-official police enrolled in such societies recalls that of certain lands where primitive manners persist almost unchanged—Morocco, for instance. "There the Moqqadem, a prying, meddlesome old buffer, knows the genealogy and the alliances of Mr. Everyman, knows the skeletons in all the cupboards." (J. J. Tharaud, *Fez ou les bourgeois de l'Islam*, p. 68.)

The older a civilisation, the more does it disapprove of such meddling with private affairs. In France, biting and pointed epigram, which flourished as late as the eighteenth century, has gone out of fashion. The English are fond of insisting that "personal remarks" are in bad taste. The highly subtilised peoples of the Far East, from whom we have much to learn, consider it ill-bred to thrust a nose or a finger into the private affairs of others, or to tell strangers about one's personal troubles, domestic mischances, etc. But the Jews, whose social life was arrested or petrified at a primitive stage, show themselves (in their European communities) unable to shake off their prying habits and their desire to keep a watchful eye upon the doings of their co-religionists. The reader will find ample evidence of this in recent descriptions of the Jewish society of those countries where the Jews have most flourished. See, for instance, J. J. Tharaud, *L'ombre de la croix*. In the United

States, where we find a civilisation that has no traditions, the combination of this fondness for prying and eaves-dropping with the phenomenal growth of journalistic enterprise has exposed to the malignity of the public everyone's past, everyone's words and actions. As soon as the press get wind of the intention of a married couple belonging to the upper circles in New York, Boston, or Chicago to apply for a divorce, an army of reporters and photographers assails their house. "Then ensues a raid, an invasion against which there is no defence. The pressmen intend to see everything, to discover everything. They force their way into all the rooms, even the dressing-rooms and lavatories. The next issue of the newspapers will devote columns to the affair, appropriately illustrated, while the text of the reports will contain details lurid enough to bring a blush to the cheeks of a grenadier."

Journalistic indiscretions during the record of divorce-court proceedings are scarcely less flamboyant in England. The newspapers supply their readers with the most attractive, the most intimate titbits. The scandal having become intolerable, after the notorious Russell divorce case the House of Commons appointed a Commission to draft a scheme of reform, and it was decided that accounts must be restricted to the speeches of counsel and the judge's summing-up. French law is more stringent, the right to report divorce proceedings being curtailed in deference to the respect for private life characteristic of the individualist Latins.

On the other hand the existence of "spiritual directors" and the confessional provides very ingenious ways of shackling both mind and conduct and of guiding these along the paths chosen by the dominant sects. We must pity persons who have no conscience; but hardly less should we pity persons who, having a conscience, allow others to "direct" it. The practice of auricular confession in the Roman Church has involved a total abandonment of sexual

freedom. Thereby the secrets of the most intimate sex relations are handed over to the priest. He knows whether a girl-penitent has or has not lost her virginity, is informed about her most secret longings, her private relations with this man or that; he knows the privacies of the bedchamber, the alcove, and the divan; he knows which wives have been unfaithful, and the names of the paramours; while the mystery of illegitimacy, whether due to incest or to mere adultery, is no mystery to him. Ill-disposed priests are able to turn their knowledge of these matters to private profit. But even the good ones, under stress of religious fanaticism, can seldom master the inclination to take charge of their penitents' sexual life, to criticise, to command the breaking-off of liaisons, to keep watch and ward. In the Middle Ages, parish priests considered themselves entitled to tell husbands when and how often to indulge. Invoking the precedent of Tobias of old, the Jew who, having married Sarah, respected her chastity for the first three nights, they ordered those who were fools enough to listen to impose after a marriage a like period of abstinence on themselves (and it must not be forgotten that the confessional gave them the formidable power of finding out whether they had been obeyed). It need hardly be said that delay could be avoided if the new-made husband was prepared to make a suitable pecuniary acknowledgement to the priest. These extortions, allusion to which is nowadays considered bad form, led to a serious dispute at Abbeville in the fifteenth century, when husbands went on strike. The parish priests threatened them with the fate of Sarah's first seven husbands, who had all been strangled on their wedding night by Asmodeus the evil spirit, but apparently these medieval wives had no such dangerous associations with the demon world as had Sarah according to the Book of Tobit. Still the laymen had to appeal to parliament and secure a decree under date March 19, 1409, forbidding the Bishop of Amiens and his ecclesiastical subordinates to demand fees

from the husbands who should wish to cohabit during the first three nights after marriage, "and it was specified that every one of the inhabitants could exercise his conjugal rights without asking leave of the bishop, his officers, or his curés". (U. P. France, *Dictionnaire encyclopédique*, p. 593.) On the other hand should a regular marriage clash with a clandestine union, it might happen that "at the confessional the priest would forbid the husband to cohabit with his second wife though the ecclesiastical judge ordered him to do so under pain of excommunication in case of failure to comply." Such interferences (to say nothing of those which concerned reading, dancing, or dress) with the most intimate private affairs of persons who lacked the energy to decide for themselves and could be frightened by the threat of eternal damnation, show to what a notable degree sexual activities could be subjected to religious control. In the U.S., not very long ago, William Jennings Bryan declared that everyone ought to live in a house with walls of glass. This extreme demand was no more than an expression of the interventionist and prohibitionist tendencies (as regards religion, sex, liquor, gambling, tobacco, etc.), which were the foundation of the famous fundamentalist's social policy. These tendencies are often presented from behind a façade labelled "philanthropic". Our attention is arrested because we do not know which to wonder at most, the servility of mankind or its ignorance. Indubitably those who abandon the reins, leaving to others the guidance of their conduct, their thoughts, their whole existence, those who do not know how to be themselves, cannot hope to reap the advantages of a sex life which marches under the sign of the doctrines of legitimacy and freedom. To every reasonable mind such weaklings must be devoid of interest.

It is from this spirit that persons who are eager to live their own lives have freed themselves, taking refuge in the solitude of the modern great town. Here can be found a defence against the excesses of interventionists. If the great

city is "tentacular", if it fascinates and attracts people from the countryside, this is not mainly because of the wealth and the pleasures it offers, since these are necessarily reserved for the few. No, it is because in a metropolis one can avoid the critical supervision of one's neighbours; because one has more liberty and more solitude; and, above all, because there one may in sexual matters live as one pleases. It is because in town you need pay no heed to the dweller in the next flat, any more than he bothers about you. Those who detest interference with their private lives take refuge in this desert which, through a strange paradox, is formed by the crowd.

New trends and new environments, these, essentially favourable to the development of individualism and to the far-reaching revision of indefensible conventions. Leading minds are peculiarly characterised by the readiness with which they have become indifferent to the cackle that was the main occupation and the chief delight of their gregarious and gossipy forefathers. With a large measure of toleration, they ignore the lives of others. They want this toleration to find universal expression in custom and in law. The chief work of the intelligence should be devoted, they hold, to the study of the grand impersonal problems whose elements, at least, are to-day known to all. These problems give mankind something serious to think about, and that supersedes the sterile futilities which have hitherto engrossed the interest of malevolent societies. The proclamation of sexual freedom, and its implication that we have no concern with other peoples' private lives, are among the main achievements of the new outlook, so sharply contrasted with the interventionist attitude of yesterday.

For it is plain at the first glance that the apostles of continence, when entering upon their fanatical crusade against sexual pleasure, have made this the principal field of application for their unhappy craving to mind other folks' business. The most obvious result of anti-sexual principles

has been to drag the sexual life out of the domain of privacy into that of public concerns, where it is subject to the attention, the comment (usually ill-natured), and the blame of all.

Much energy and unceasing alertness of will must be manifested in order to reconquer all the rights attaching to sexual freedom. Those endowed with the requisite energy and will-power may confidently expect to see the discouraged interventionists give ground. But the interventionists will triumph if they are allowed to refuse to others the right to regulate their own sexual affairs.

Not all are capable of the effort required to defeat these meddlers. The anti-sexualists can marshal against the weak and the timid a powerful coalition of evil influences. Every taboo is able to group these with the vigour and the hatred which animate it when any opposition is shown. The family, in particular, claims the right of dictating to children what shall be their sexual acts, their preferences, their loves; and in most legal codes this tutelage is continued till an absurdly advanced age. The neighbour of either sex is keenly interested about the way in which a girl regulates or fails to regulate her sexual impulses; her comings and goings are watched and her friends are closely scrutinised. The housemaid will know whether you have slept alone or with a bedfellow, and will hasten to pass on her knowledge. The prohibitionist landlord, duly informed in the latter event, will promptly give you notice. The tradesmen will play their part. Only too often do extra-conjugal relations become a police matter, even though they may have given no trouble, nor seemed likely to endanger the public peace. The courtesan, who in ancient times was respected as an amiable provider of pleasure not otherwise easily procurable, is now treated as a criminal and handed over to the tender mercies of policemen. In some of the States of the American Union she commits an indictable offence every time she practices her profession. Others go so far that, like

Maria Theresa of pious memory, they station detectives in the hotels to prevent a man and a woman sleeping together unless they have respected the taboo, i.e. unless they are a married couple. In a word, sex relations have become a common ground where all others besides the mainly interested parties claim and enforce a right of inspection. Lovers may be compelled to hide themselves in lanes, or to wear disguises when they meet—like thieves trying to throw sleuths off the trail.

Consider the position of young girls who live "at home". As Léon Blum rightly remarks, "in secret they all crave for freedom". Since a sound instinct gives them a reasonable conception of natural law, the thought of the sexual act is alluring. We know what is really meant by talk of their chastity, their modesty, their "good conduct". These are mere euphemisms for repression, for the triumph of the censorship, enforced upon the less intelligent by the threats or the artificial exaltations of the taboo, supported in the case of the more intelligent by the fear of a hostile public opinion which, should they fail to comply, would prevent their getting "settled" in life by marriage. In the present state of "morals" when anti-sexualism is dominant, a girl would need remarkable independence of mind and exceptional strength of character to infringe the taboo. Generally speaking, she would have to defy the family which has incorporated in the laws its prejudices and its proprietary instincts. We have also to take into account the stupidity of the lover who, in the West, though willing to marry a widow or a divorced woman, usually demands from a girl a token of virginity, as if his wife's previous career belonged to him. John Selden wrote three hundred years ago: "Of all actions of a man's life, his marriage does least concern other people, yet, of all actions of our life, 'tis most meddled with by other people." This consideration may be extended to the whole domain of sex.

For those who accept the legitimacy of sexual acts



as a rational principle of ethics, these interventions into private life—to blame it, prohibit it, or render it difficult—are repudiated without more ado as unjustifiable, intolerable, and tyrannical. They cannot be of the slightest use, for as soon as one is convinced that, from their very nature, sexual acts are beyond good and evil, when one has restored them to their proper place among physiological manifestations, such monstrous invasions of privacy cease to have logical, scientific, or moral foundations. They seem arbitrary without qualification. If undertaken by individuals acting on their own initiative the best rejoinder will come from the energy of the person or persons concerned. But in any case such individuals ought not to be able to rely upon the support of the State on behalf of their interventionist mania, their baiting of sexuality for its own sake, which is a sign of their feeble-mindedness or their intellectual bondage.

According to the doctrine of legitimacy, sexual acts are inviolable manifestations of private life, which must receive the same broad-minded toleration that the modern spirit has already conceded to the private manifestations of metaphysical, religious, and political thought. In France this sentiment in favour of toleration, though latent, has long existed; it has affirmed itself and expanded in favour of the thoughts and needs of modern life. In France, it will hardly be needful to insist upon its advantages, for toleration alone can make life simpler, more agreeable, more benevolent, and less exposed (at every turn) to the offensives of critical hatred, narrow interpretation, and undesirable intervention.

The sexual act is not a public matter. Sexual activity is exclusively the affair of the persons immediately concerned and, so long as those who indulge are in all other legal, social, and moral respects on the right side of the law, no one is entitled to call them to account for what they do in the sexual sphere. That is an essential inference from

the doctrine of legitimacy and freedom, coordinating these two principles for one and the same liberation.

Strong through this discipline, every one should demand from others more than respect for or mere ignorance of his sexual acts. This is a preserve which should be inviolably guarded. One should not even know whether another person exercises his sexual function or in what manner. When, therefore, you see a couple enter a bedroom, you should not ask yourself whether they are or are not married, or pass judgment (like some tale-bearing old cat) upon this manifestation of sexual activity. If public opinion retains any reason for expressing itself in such an affair it ought (for the general welfare) to declare its hostility to the intruders into private life who want to disturb these intimacies by their scrutiny. A considerable part of our ills, of the discomfort that effects our life, comes from our failure to observe this essential principle of toleration and indifference towards the sexual affairs of others. The tyranny of metaphysical taboos has been broken, and anyone with a reasonable amount of moral courage can get on very well to-day outside the framework of any of the creeds. Why should we endure the slavery imposed by the sexual taboo? Its coercions, tyrannies, and misfortunes are no less onerous. Let me insist once more that the moral reform which the champions of legitimacy advocate with so much ardour is only the application in the sphere of sex of that toleration which in modern times has been extended to the other manifestations of freedom of conscience. It is the application of the vigorous utterance made by Roger-Collard in 1819: "Private life ought to be a fenced precinct."

One of the practical consequences of this restoration of sexuality to the domain of private life, and of an unqualified respect for this latter, will be promptly seen in the relations between employers and employed, whether these employed are persons of "low degree" or are highly placed in the State service. In the name of the metaphysical taboo, the

employer has for centuries arrogated the right of dictating what his employees shall believe or act upon in political and religious matters; he used to demand from them religious demonstrations that squared with his own convictions, and electoral behaviour in conformity with his own interests. To get a job or keep it, the employee was often compelled to repudiate his personal preferences, and his fitness for the task he was eager to undertake would not even be considered if he was not prepared to toe the line. It cannot be said that this is now nothing but an old story, for there are many industrial enterprises in which the colour of a vote or the character of a creed are still determining causes of a man's being taken on or given the sack. But in theory, at any rate, it is agreed that a man's fitness for his work has nothing to do with his religious or political opinions; and often the power of organised labour suffices to ensure that practice in this matter shall accord with theory. If employers do interfere in these respects, they act indirectly and shamefacedly, showing that they know themselves to be flying in the face of accepted standards.

It ought to be just the same as regards sexual behaviour. An immediate inference of the principles of legitimacy and freedom is that an employee should have full self-determination in the field of sex. Why should an employer be allowed the privilege of infringing the principle of legitimacy where his employees are concerned? He has no right to insist upon particular forms of sex relations or of abstinences. If he is forbidden to thrust his fingers into the pie when religion or politics are in question, it is all the plainer that an employee's sexual behaviour can be no excuse for a dismissal so long as the quality or quantity of work remains unaffected. But in the name of the current sexual code a mistress will often impose continence on her maids by making it a condition of employment; and an official will be cashiered because he has an extra-conjugal liaison with a woman instead of living with her under the forms dictated by the

code. Thus competence and zealous service do not suffice. The taboo must be respected. Such a demand is no less insufferable than an infringement of freedom of conscience in the religious or political sphere.

Besides, this tyranny, like all kindred errors, brings its own punishment. It deprives the private employer or the State of the valuable services of those who are rejected in accordance with a criterion which has no bearing on their fitness for the job. Recall the sensational affair of Charles Stewart Parnell who was deposed from the leadership of the Irish Parliamentary Party for purely personal reasons. More recently, in 1925, Professor J. B. S. Haldane, then Reader in Biochemistry in Cambridge University, was dismissed from his post, on the ground that he had been co-respondent in a divorce case. He regained his position as the result of an appeal in 1926. This primitive confusion of two utterly different types of activity betrays an inability to analyse facts and class them in their proper categories. Modern France has not escaped similar manifestations of ineptitude; whereas, when the case of the Cambridge professor occurred, many English voices were raised in protest.

In the instances just recounted, persons of distinction were broken for the sole reason that their sexual behaviour had infringed the dominant taboo, and the likelihood of such flagrant injustice urging them into the rebel camp was ignored. But the undeviating enforcement of the principles of sexual legitimacy and sexual freedom would have prevented occurrences so noxious to the general welfare. Work is one thing, the sexual act is another; he who is entitled to decide the value of the former, should pay no heed to the latter; he should learn not to pry into the question whether the servantmaid he engages is a virgin, or into the parentage of the child she is providing for with so much difficulty; and he must realise that it is no business of his how, apart from the regular performance of their duties, his servitors of either sex may obtain sexual gratification.

Recently (in 1931) the Sheffield County Court awarded damages to a female shop-assistant for wrongful dismissal. She had been discharged on account of intimacy "during unemployed hours" with the manager of her department. The court held that when a woman happened to lead an immoral life ("immorality" here, of course, signifying "sexual irregularity") out of hours, this was no concern of her employer so long as her working capacity remained unimpaired. The judge added that dismissal in such a case could only be justified if there was some connexion between the misconduct and the woman's work, whereas in the present instance there had been no breach of contract on the plaintiff's part.

Returning to the topic discussed in the previous paragraph, let us note some subordinate but still momentous inferences from the principle there laid down. The restoration of sexual acts to the domain of private life will effect a cleansing of the social spirit. Far from degrading that spirit, it will check the tendency to batten on gossip, will foster tolerance and readiness to adopt broad outlooks. To-day, in western societies and the contemporary family, an absurd hubbub is raised about the question of any member spending a night out. Novels and plays are full of allusions to this thorny problem. A mother bursts into tears because her son did not come home to sleep; parents bar their doors against a daughter who fails to return at the prescribed hour. There is, in narrow minds, as far as these matters are concerned, a tragi-comical mishmash of conventional habits and anti-sexual prejudices. Under stress of this obsession, everything seems to turn upon the sexual behaviour of the offspring, much as Bossuet made the history of the world turn upon a Jewish axis. Social habits, feelings, and interests make it impossible for parents to adopt the simple expedient of leaving other peoples' lives alone even though the "other people" should be their own children. Literature is haunted by the spectre of sex. French

novel-writers, whether of the psychological or the realist school, have their thoughts mainly busied about the situation which the English call "the eternal triangle"; their dominant theme is the account of women as revealed by the nature of sexual activities, by neuroses due to repression or by the relief which follows liberation from it, by conflicts between traditionalism and freedom. Everything is measured by such criteria. This is not the fault of the novelists, but of the conventions which have overshadowed simpler views of life.

Let me give two typical cases mentioned in a well-documented paper on *The Sexual Rights of Spinsters* read by R. B. Kerr at the 1929 congress of the World League for Sexual Reform:

(1) "Take the case of an only daughter devotedly attached to her father. It is surely monstrous that such a woman should be compelled, either to desert her father or to remain celibate. It is far better that she should continue to keep house for her father and have her love affairs outside the home."

(2) "Nothing is more common than to see two sisters living together protected only by a dog. In very many cases they would prefer a man, and there are many men who would gladly avail themselves of such an opportunity. The only obstacle is Mrs. Grundy."

As I should phrase it, there is only one obstacle. Far from allowing such women to manage their own affairs, their neighbours and their fellow-citizens keep constant watch on their sexual life, and would hasten to trumpet the matter should anything be done that conflicts with generally accepted canons. There can be but one remedy, complete restoration of privacy to sexual life, under legal enactments (if necessary) which will punish infringement of such privacy. Many of the Mongolian civilisations have achieved this valuable position, adopting social arrangements that facilitate the solution of such cases as those mentioned by Kerr.

Respect for the privacy of sexual life will also lead us to abstain from violating the seal of secrecy as regards others. In the first volume of these *Studies* (pp. 207 and foll.), I referred to the admirable indifference, in certain Oriental lands, on a husband's part, towards what is called a woman's "past". Except among those with whom imitation of the West has become a craze, monstrous enquiries into the private history of "a woman with a past" are discountenanced. The absence of virginity in a girl may cheapen her in the eyes of those for whom the hymen has a monetary value; but its loss does not entail moral reprobation or impertinent questions, and the persons concerned merely allude to that loss as a normal result of earlier intercourse.

Among the peoples of Indo-China and the South Seas, we note that a woman's previous history in sexual matters is treated with great discretion; that there is marked tolerance as regards extra-conjugal pregnancy; and that the general sense of the legitimacy of sexual acts is firmly established, for surprise is shown when a fuss is made about a girl's lack of virginity. Herein we can see the indubitable superiority of eastern civilisation over western, the latter being responsible for the manifold troubles due to its sexual intolerance. Because of this intolerance, and above all in the domain of specialised (or individualised) love, certain persons are haunted by the thought of their partner's sexual antecedents, and more particularly the man by the thought of the woman's. Dominated by narrow conceptions of chastity and virginity, in the psychological conditions previously described, they dwell on imaginations of the past instead of giving free rein to their present impulses. So hopelessly can a weak mind become unbalanced by the frenzy of the taboo, that cases have been recorded in which a newly married man has killed himself because he failed to find in his wife the expected signs of physical virginity. There could be no more flagrant way of showing an a priori denial of the legitimacy of sexual acts than thus to blame one's

partner for having engaged in them previously, to the detriment of so fragile a structure as the hymen.

If the "physical evidence of virginity" is likely to give rise to so much trouble, it would surely be better to follow the example of those races which, as a matter of ritual, destroy it at puberty. The prejudice in favour of virginity has been so harmful that we might certainly welcome radical measures which would safeguard fools. Agreed that such fools don't matter much, but it has to be admitted that their form of mania may make them very miserable. Moreover, they have not brought it on themselves. The importance which the imbeciles alluded to in the last paragraph attached to a wife's virginity was inculcated by conventional views, by the inflated talk of prohibitionists, by the prejudices of society. Emile Bergerat justly remarks that the man of the West insists upon virginity in a wife, not so much because he seeks pleasure as from a sense of duty. "It is an indispensable condition of his happiness, and he can only regard his wife as a virtuous woman so long as he knows himself to be the first in the field." Destutt de Tracy, again, makes fun of the longing "to be the first to pick the flower", a longing which, he says, becomes a mania in elderly men and in rakes. One cannot expect everyone to be strong enough to make headway against such a current. But we must see to it that the weak-minded shall no longer be poisoned by false teaching, and we must spread among them the enfranchising doctrine of sexual legitimacy. We can do this with all the more confidence because "the presence of the hymen does not prove virginity. According to the best medico-legal authorities, in not more than half the cases can a responsible qualified expert witness say definitely by the presence or absence of the hymen, whether or not sexual intercourse has occurred. Its retention in adult women is a fetish based upon savage taboo and sacerdotal custom, and having no ethical, legal, or medical justification." (Ettie A. Hornibrook, *Practical Birth Control*, pp. 37-38.) The teachings of the mechanistic



theory, which show that to a great extent coitus can be replaced by other means, confirm this statement, and prove how little importance should be ascribed to physiological virginity.

It is among the peoples whose ideas and practices are more or less directly affiliated to those of the Hebrews that virginity is so highly prized. The Musulmans attach enormous importance to the hymen. Among some of them, the Nubians for instance, a girl is worthless unless she is a virgin, and to make sure of this she is subjected to the tortures of infibulation. The reader should note that it is the value of a girl as merchandise which is mainly in question. The faithful learn from the Koran that the houris of the Mohammedan paradise have their virginity restored every day. This promise implies that the Arabs in the days of the Prophet must have taken a peculiar delight in the work of defloration. That opinion is confirmed by the fact that it is still customary, the day after a wedding night, to make among the tribesmen a public display of the linen which has been stained by blood from the ruptured hymen of the deflowered girl. An Arab thinks much of muscular strength and of chances of displaying it, so this idea of effecting defloration as a physical feat chimes in with his bodily instincts. Some, indeed, may grasp Mohammed's idea in a less concrete way, thinking only of a mode of oblivion thanks to which the woman who has been possessed overnight will return to her lover on the following day renewed in the sense that she will have no memory of what has happened to her. A Georgian poet, in a folk-song entitled *The Houris*, exclaims :

And at each return of dawn,  
A miracle having been worked by the Creator,  
They disclose to the men who love them for aye  
A virginity renewed.  
The virginity of a heart which has never loved,  
The virginity of a mind which knows naught of love,  
The virginity of a body which has lost its memory  
Of the raptures of the night that has fled.

Here the semblance of daily renovation would be triumphantly secured by the ingenious device of oblivion.

Other civilisations, and notably the Mongolian, have shown a marked superiority in attaching very little value to this absurd membrane, and even in trying to get rid of it as soon as possible. Duquesne, the Indian traveller, reports having seen young married women who had just sacrificed their virginity in a pagoda near Pondicherry, by seating themselves on a phallus made of wood and iron; and he notes that in other temples the priests used to offer themselves for the performance of this service. From a somewhat obscure passage in St. Augustine's *City of God*, it would seem that the practice was known in Rome, where young married women effected defloration by embracing an image of Priapus.

Happily, however, conventional views are changing. Judge Lindsey points out that nowadays one often meets young men with no objection to marrying a girl who has had a baby or even more than one. A logician has good reason for pointing out that there can be no instinctive repulsion on man's part to "the woman with a past", since widows and divorced women (with or without children) have never found any difficulty in getting married. The gulf between the "two kinds" of women is fixed by conventional prejudice alone. The recent change of attitude confirms the psychologist's opinion that a man who loves a woman loves her for what she now is, recking little of her previous sexual experiences. We see, then, that to an increasing extent woman, no less than man, can claim sexual freedom, and that a man bows before this truth when he abandons his traditional privilege of despising a woman who has loved freely.

In virtue of the strict application of the principles of sexual legitimacy, every sexual intimacy should be regarded as a self-limited affair, neither partner having any concern with the other's sexual past. Whatever that past may have

been, it was essentially legitimate, and let that suffice. It was as legitimate whatever it may have been as the sexual past of a widow or a divorced woman, with which the new husband does not dream of reproaching her. The mere idea of legitimacy covers all past sexual acts and relations, amplifying the scope of the indifference with which you should contemplate a past that has lapsed into oblivion, since the present alone belongs to you. A love which is in its opening phase should not hold an inquest upon dead loves. How childish it is to torture oneself with the thought of the sexual acts which may have been performed by anyone prior to the time of one's own possession.

To conclude, the principle of legitimacy teaches us to abstain from forming judgments as to the quality of sexual acts. Never say to yourself: "That was not love", or "This is not love". When you do so, you are putting love into a strait-waistcoat. What do you know about the intensity of the desire you are criticising, or about the tumult of sentiments it evokes? On no account should you force sexual acts into conventionalised categories. Acknowledge all kinds without dispute, since all are equally legitimate. Your attitude should be that of free spirits who, while refusing to allow others to call them to account for their intimacies, are no less fastidious in avoiding scrutiny of the privacies of others.

In a word, one who has espoused the doctrine of legitimacy must ignore the sexual life of others. It is no business of his, and, being legitimate by definition, is outside the field of his judgments. He who has unreservedly accepted these principles can apply them without difficulty to his friends, his neighbours, his children; and one of his first duties is to maintain the sexual freedom of his immediate circle. This will give him unimaginable peace. The social upsets caused by interventionist anti-sexualism, by its suspicions and calumnies, by its complications and torments, seem remote and incomprehensible to those who reject the

unpleasant role of moral censor, and resolutely abstain from passing judgment on the actions of their fellows. Freedom will have achieved a great conquest when reasonable persons have accepted this corollary of the principle of legitimacy.

*D. Society must respect all Sexual Acts held to be Legitimate.*—Individuals with prohibitionist leanings have unceasingly persecuted the manifestations of sexuality, have never wearied of stigmatising them as shameful, immoral, and a danger to society. The upshot has been that even liberal minds have been influenced by the persistent ostracism of sex, and have come to regard this censoriousness as necessary. The taboo has been affixed, the tomtoms have been sounded, and the prohibitionists have raised stentorian voices. Simple and natural though the sexual act is, many communities, seized with a madness sometimes infantile and sometimes raging, have surrounded it with a preposterous hoarding of suspicion, veto, and invective. What could we expect when one of the most powerful of extant religions (to judge by its own claims) seems to exist mainly if not exclusively to glorify sexual paranoia? The leading exponents of this religion, its most representative champions, helped by the submission of devotees and the indifference of the masses, show in their writings and sermons an obsession with sex, about which they are far more concerned than about wider and to a rationalist more momentous issues.

In the Latin countries, no doubt, the notion of sexual freedom has made considerable headway, but among the Anglo-Saxon peoples freedom in sexual matters is almost unknown. In Britain and the U.S., drunkenness, though artificial and harmful, is looked on with less disfavour than is open and natural defiance of the sexual taboo. "Morality" in these lands means little more than "sexual morality", i.e. a profession of faith in the sexual taboo. People are haunted by scandalous rumours about the sexual affairs

of private persons; the reporters are busied in nosing them out; newspapers make unpleasant insinuations or publish sensational articles; gossip is rife; one who has been caught and pilloried will be cold-shouldered by those who, being more cautious, have escaped detection, and hope to safeguard themselves by joining in the hue and cry against the transgressor. I once travelled on a steamer in the company of a young Frenchman and his mistress and some French couples who were "properly" married. The Anglo-Saxon passengers were amazed to find that the "respectable" Frenchwomen showed no tendency to treat the free lovers as black sheep, though the British pretended not to see the culprits or regarded them as untouchables. Such an aloofness from pariahs has been intensified of late by the wave of modern puritanism which has marked a new and formidable offensive against toleration. In the days of the Diamond Necklace Affair (1786), Séguier, the famous lawyer, who was having a set-to with Fleury, another light of the legal profession, could still declare in open parliament: "I sometimes visit ladies of easy virtue, and even leave my carriage standing at the door. This is a private matter. But no one can accuse me of having ever accepted a bribe." A fine distinction between true morality and private sexual conduct, but it is one which my contemporaries seem slow to grasp.

The defenders of sexual freedom demand that this disfavour, this ostracism, this persecution of sexual acts shall cease. Let sex encounters regain the position which legitimately belongs to natural processes. The fruitful principle of legitimacy will entail, will re-establish, the right to enter into sex relations openly, unconstrainedly, without their being criticised or malevolently judged. We do not wish to force sexual freedom upon anyone. But it is equally improper for anyone to force continence upon others, or, in the name of an alleged moral necessity, to prescribe a restriction of sexual pleasure. The only thing that matters

is that both the participators in a sexual act should be free. No one has a social right to call to account those who affirm and practise the principles of sexual legitimacy and sexual freedom, which are the logical consequences of freedom of conscience. Sexual pleasure, its affirmation, and its attainment should be taken as a matter of course by society, just as are the pleasures of sport, for, in the last analysis, sexual pleasure is the most normal of the pleasures of sport, and is, as G. de la Fouchardière rightly insists, the king of these.

It follows, therefore, that sexual pleasure ought to secure the same recognition as any other physiological manifestation. Its varieties (sexual fantasies, etc.) should be as little open to criticism and as unemotionally considered as are the gastronomic fancies and preferences of culinary experts, which hold a thoroughly honourable rank among caprices. For a woman as for a man, when unbound by specialised contracts, the passing of a pleasant night in amorous dalliance with a lover or a mistress will then become as socially acceptable as is a visit to a tennis-court or a concert-room. In societies untainted by anti-sexualism there can occur agreeable days in which, as Léon Blum phrases it, the parents of a girl who returns from her lover's embraces will be delighted because, in a few hours of pleasant sexual sport, she has performed acts which in their day they were delighted to enjoy.

For one who has unreservedly accepted the principle of sexual legitimacy, the despair of a father or a brother who laments, and feels degraded, when he learns that a daughter or a sister has undertaken extra-conjugal sexual activity, will seem preposterous, showing only that the person thus affected is still enslaved by prohibitionist atavism. In many such instances, moreover, there is at work, conscious or unconscious, but certainly unavowed, an interested motive brought into play by the rupture of the girl's hymen. Then the protests are hypocritical instead of being merely childish.

Sexual freedom ought to be granted in a generous spirit, without any restrictions dictated by personal or family considerations. These are abrogated by the need to accord equal freedom to everyone. Such freedom makes it essential to discriminate, in each person concerned, between sex, which is one thing, and the kinship with others, which is on an utterly different footing. One may retain great fondness for a mother or a sister, and still have the wit to let the loved one's sexual life alone, because one recognises its privacy. Much more affection will be shown by abstaining from interference in these purely personal matters than by the reverse policy, which can only lead to vexations, misunderstandings, and even disasters. A supreme advantage of the doctrine of sexual legitimacy is that, in its light, the possibility of blame is expunged, for everything is regarded as natural.

Finally, those who espouse this doctrine can no longer dream of taking it amiss, when someone who is a good, straightforward, and industrious worker on behalf of social welfare, finds relaxation in sexual pleasure with a freely consenting partner. People will no longer be obliged to hide themselves when seeking the gratification of the sexual impulse, for they will not be excommunicated when they do so frankly. Nay more, far from being regarded as a fault, sexual indulgence will be considered one of the best rewards of diligence or talent. An Asiatic monarch in the old days would recompense a counsellor or a servant by the gift of a pretty girl. With the reserve that nowadays we should insist upon the woman's free consent (this being indispensable in societies based upon the notion of individual liberty), what recognition of services rendered could be more adequate than the provision of sexual enjoyment under choice conditions? It was reasonable enough that beautiful women, trained in the art of love and having no taste for sexual specialisation—courtesans, in a word—should, in a worthy setting, be offered by a grateful society

to men whom it delighted to honour. Doubtless such women felt that, on these occasions, they were fulfilling an exalted role.

By this advance in our views, the most unreasonable of conventions will be swept away. The pleasurable sexual act, being no longer classifiable as either respectable or blameworthy, will be accepted without demur as a necessary and unchallengeable part of social life. Shame will not attach to it, and it will come to be regarded as the natural blossoming of the legitimacy of all sexual manifestations, which will once again have become fully acceptable, normal, universally desirable, and good.

*E. Sexual Acts must once more be fitted into the Commonplaces of Daily Life.*—No one who has closely followed the demonstration of the principle of legitimacy will need further insistence on the intimate permeation of life with sexuality. Apart from this, the connexion will be obvious to those who, even though their traditional preferences make them opposed to sexual freedom, have given any thought to the problem.

As soon as we have recognised the legitimacy of sexual acts, we shall be ready to restore them to their proper and leading place in human existence, as demanded by simple respect for truth. Since sexuality pervades life and is legitimate, why repudiate its perpetual affirmation? Why should we force it to dissimulate, to assume a contrite air, to wear a burglar's mask? Its place in social life should be as important, as stable, and as conspicuous as that which human communities are wont to allot to the other legitimate needs and satisfactions. Sociologists have justly pointed out that primitive societies, which had a mania for imposing prohibitions, did so in respect of various articles of diet, such as fish, milk, and particular kinds of flesh-meat. We have succeeded in ridding ourselves of these absurd interdictions, so that hardly anyone except the strict adherents of certain creeds now troubles to observe them. The same advance has still to be made in the case of the sexual taboo



—though it cannot be denied that a good deal of work has already been done.

The prohibitionists succeeded in making man regard his genital organs and their functions as abnormal and semi-monstrous, so that the whole domain of bodily love is under this spell. The first task of the advocates of sexual legitimacy must be to lay these spooks, in themselves and in others.

What method should we adopt? The adepts of our rationalist credo should evidently re-introduce into everyday life the familiar contemplation of the sexual organs and functions, no longer by periphrases and allusions, half-expressed terms, indirect and conventionalised manœuvres, but integrally, freely, and frankly. We must not allow sexual acts to be made a bugbear of; they must become as normal and unabashed a topic of conversation, as manifest an aim of behaviour, as gastronomy, sleep, or the toilet. Nudity, the disclosure of the genital organs, must no longer be deemed scandalous, but must become habitual and in-offensive. The legitimate sexual pleasure one has enjoyed or expects to enjoy must be as avowable as the pleasures of the table, or any other pleasures.

Nudity is so perfectly natural that, despite the prohibitionists, it has retained an official position even in societies which have been most eager to put it under the ban. It took refuge in art, for most purity fanatics would hesitate to risk an attempt to dislodge it there. From the time of the Renaissance, under the guidance of rediscovered antique statues, the splendours of the flesh came into vogue once more, quickly recovering a dominant position thanks to the triumph of sculptors and painters. The march of the nude cannot now be arrested, but secures such widespread approbation that the puritans have almost ceased to protest. Careful not to rely too much on this popularity, the apostles of the nude think it better to pretend that they are merely reverencing an artistic demonstration; and they utter a disputable formula, "the nude is chaste". Once that stage

is reached, there is no serious difficulty in restoring the nudities of art. We shall study later the way in which, quite recently, the prohibitionists, by creating the notion of pornography, have tried to restrict their concessions, and above all to prevent any extension to the sphere of sensual enjoyment. But the principle can no longer be contested. The artistic reproduction of integral nudity (in which there is no absurd hiding by fig-leaves and no pseudo-castration) finds a notable place in twentieth-century photographic art which, in France, Germany, and England is presenting us with remarkable and methodical studies of the human body. [See, for instance, Marcel Natkin's *Photography of the Nude*, Fountain Press, London, 1937.]

But nudity has still to regain its legitimate place in social life. In the first volume of these Studies (*Sex Life and Sex Ethics*, pp. 59-60), I showed how natural, in certain countries, is the exposure of the nude human form. The plethora of precautions, suspicions, and prosecutions which, in prohibitionist lands, helps to enwrap the body, and, above all, the genital organs, shows what strenuous efforts of uneasy and neurotic wills have been needed to effect the travesty of such simple facts. The habit of contemplating integral nudity quickly converts into a matter of course what was at first a scandal to the prohibitionists. Since the purity fanatics have not yet compelled us to put trousers on the quadrupeds which go to and fro in the public streets, it is plain that custom can rob the genital organs of their sting. We no longer see them; we don't see them at all. The women of the Isle of Bali go about with the breasts exposed. This astonishes the new-comer for a few hours only. Then he ceases to notice the nudity which becomes familiar, and when he visits another country he is at first surprised to find that women cover their breasts. This will convince him that custom would soon stifle integral nudity in both sexes. The advocates of sexual legitimacy consider it their manifest duty to restore nudity to everyday life, thus depriving it

of that forbidden and criminal tang which makes it an offence against propriety as well as against the law. We shall see later that this principle will be of great importance in the education of children and in the revision of criminal codes.

Now let us advance a stage, to consider acts of sexual pleasure properly so called. I must point out at once that, by a further unfortunate result of conventional prejudices, it is usual to describe them as "low" and "common". If they were, how many persons with whom, day by day, it is a matter of self-respect to show themselves stylish, would have to regard themselves as convicted of vulgarity! Neither copulation nor any other way of obtaining sexual pleasure is essentially coarse, for all are natural; in fact they exhibit, or can easily be made to exhibit, the rhythmic elegancies of gymnastics. It is only prohibitionist convention which maliciously induces us to denounce (as many foolishly do) nature as coarse. We have an ingenious way of idealising or disparaging our various activities as the fancy takes us, or rather as social convention may decide. We admire "the fine, sweeping gesture of the sower", and we speak slightly of the actions which render procreation possible—though we do not fail to exalt the latter to our secret selves when we are the doers. By a preposterous sentimentalism, of acts of copulation necessarily identical we make some "noble" when performed by an elderly married woman who, besides being mother of a family, is ugly and misshapen, and others "base" when performed by a splendid girl who is defying the official taboo. These distinctions are worth no more than are the prejudices and the defective observations of those who make them. Nor have the blessings of the most eminent priests ever made the slightest change in natural secretions or in the phases of the orgasm.

The doctrine of legitimacy will help us to refute the distinction which the anti-sexuals like to draw between the "grossness" of rural or working-class habits in sexual matters,

and the "refinement" of civilised and upper-class ways. If there is any difference at all, it is that repression and the censorship have not worked such havoc among the common people, who have remained in close contact with nature and are more aware of the truth. For these precise reasons they act, as they talk, without circumlocution, and far more spontaneously than those who are styled "their betters". When sexual desire awakens, they often satisfy it without postponement. The result is the same—minus hypocrisy. Here, as in dress and housing, the classes exhibit a difference of styles. Yet no matter whether the ultimate mechanical act has or has not been preceded by the airs and graces which are simperingly spoken of as "the decencies"; no matter whether it crumples the finest linen or ruffles torn sheets; no matter whether it is done upon a costly bed or in a hay-loft—the same rhythm will govern its development. No rationalist will admit that this rhythm, when pushed to its natural culmination, can exhibit more refinement in one case and more coarseness in another.

So plain had it become that the prevailing attitude towards sex was incredibly foolish, that from the close of the nineteenth century a reaction set in, aiming at the scientific enlightenment of lads and lasses concerning procreation and sexual problems. There ensued campaigns (which, though broadly conceived, were inadequate from lack of proper methods) on behalf of sexual education, signalised by a spate of popular literature to teach "what every boy and girl ought to know". These attempts were not unavailing, and the historian of human sexual morals must not ignore them. They marked the timid beginnings of a social revolution. Akin to them were the lectures on love, delivered at a date (1921) when Freud's work had already become widely known, by Dr. S. Arnault, which at any rate contained a clear proclamation—to audiences whose composition necessarily made them shy—of such truths as the following: "The organs whereby the act of

reproduction is effected, having great importance both individual and social, deserve close study, vigilant care, and respectful solicitude, despite the fact that false (not to say sadistic) views have hypocritically cast discredit upon them." And, a little later: "Can we find any words strong enough in which to blame the educationists whose criminal narrowness and hypocrisy have for so many generations left wallowing in contemptuous indifference and uncleanness these organs whose biological destiny is the sacred one of perpetuating life, and which merit for that reason the utmost care and a quasi-religious reverence?" (S. Arnault, *L'amour, école du bonheur*, pp. 30-31.) All the more because this author's conclusions are so vitally different from our own, does his estimate of the situation show how on all hands people recognise the need for restoring sex to its proper place among the familiar conceptions of everyday life and for definitively ending the ostracism which has weighed upon sex organs and sex manifestations. The doctrine of nudism, and the campaigns on its behalf in Germany and other northern countries, are a no less convincing sign of this movement. I shall return to the matter in the next chapter.

The great mistake is that the apostles of continence believe and declare extra-conjugal sexual intercourse to be a rare (they would add, "and a repugnant") phenomenon, usually imposed by a man on a woman by force or by threats. The worst of it is that incessant repetition of this absurdity has gone far to persuade western girls that they ought to consider themselves insulted, degraded, shamed, when sexual pleasure is offered them. We know, of course, that all this rubbish is artfully staged in countries where an anti-sexual mentality prevails, and that the mentality is not natural but purely artificial. The truth is that, outside these countries at any rate, a woman is almost invariably delighted to participate in sexual pleasure, that she welcomes the offer of it by the male, and considers the offer a compliment.

The inevitable inference is that we must no longer dramatise sexual physiology. The most normal, most essential, and most delightful of human activities must no longer be stigmatised as infamous or criminal because they do not conform to puerile conventions.

*F. Necessary Changes in the Anti-Sexual Vocabulary.*—Anti-sexual fanatics use a terminology which is out of keeping with objective realities. Sexual pleasure exists. If it is as legitimate as any other physiological pleasure, we cannot follow those who, wishing to proscribe it, have light-heartedly invented the notions of vice, obscenity, debauchery, lust, defilement, beastliness, indecency, looseness, and what not (I omit some of the worst invectives). These terms serve merely to show distaste for the manifestations of sex life, which is really one and indivisible, whether these manifestations are official or unofficial. But if we are to get rid of the idea that there can be any illegitimacy or impurity attaching to the satisfaction of the sexual impulse, must we not also ban the above-quoted epithets?

Even specialised (or individualised) love, very real in the form of a temporary desire which imperiously demands satisfaction, is, in the Christian scheme, no more than a regretful concession to "sin". ("But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn".) All the stronger, then, is the Christian condemnation of the classical pagan's apotheosis of sexual enjoyment apart from marriage. Thus what the anti-sexual moralists lump together as immorality, debauchery, obscenity, pornography, looseness, and vice, is nothing but free sexual pleasure, as contrasted with the narrow and exclusive conception of specialised love, and an expression of a general hatred of a frank appreciation of the sexual act per se. Rationalists, when organising their lives, must not let themselves be caught in this snare. But those who, in former days, having shaken off taboos, simultaneously ignored the narrow rules of specialised love transformed into a sacrament, were

spoken of as "libertines", the word being used in a derogatory sense.

Freud shows how much confusion reigns, even in the minds of scientists, regarding the interpretation of sexual acts when he quotes the utterance of a famous psychiatrist: "There is nothing sexual about the act of childbirth." Obviously the author of this dictum was under the harrow of the moral code according to which whatever concerns reproduction is lawful and proper, but whatever concerns sexual pleasure is unlawful and improper. This is an additional proof how difficult it is to decide the moral value of sexual acts unless we cling firmly to the rules which physiology and logic have enabled us to establish.

But these rules facilitate a trenchant criticism of the abusive terminology which is the specialty of anti-sexual moralists, and our criticism will show that we ought unhesitatingly to suppress that vocabulary once and for all.

The word *lust* has acquired a sinful odour from the persecution of the "flesh" by Judeo-Christian dogmatists. [In the French language *luxure*, used to denote "lust", conveys also the idea of "luxury", which, taken by itself, is usually spoken of as *le luxe*. In the paragraphs that follow, therefore, the sense cannot be exclusively conveyed by the use of the term "lust".] To confirm this statement, I will quote Descuret's definition: "Lust signifies, not merely sexual excesses noxious to health, but any kind of extra-conjugal sexual intercourse, or even conjugal intercourse if effected in such a way as to avoid the propagation of the species." Such a definition is admirably fitted to illustrate the arbitrariness and confusion that prevail in the minds of prohibitionists, for it professes to characterise a psychological state with reference to an institution (namely marriage) which exists in certain societies but may not exist in others. The definition, therefore, notwithstanding its specious appearance of generality and accuracy, is exclusively sustained by its bearing on social conventions and particular

circumstances. It is frustrated, signally, by the obvious flaw that it models itself in accordance with extant conventions, instead of revising these conventions in a way which would adapt them to a truly scientific and general formula.

What is stigmatised as lust is really man's pursuit of the acme of pleasure in all things. It is a vital impetus towards the perfect, and a rejection of mediocrity. "Everything may be damned as 'luxury'", writes Rémy de Gourmont. "It is luxurious to want a varied diet, good cooking, spiced foods, the fruits of the earth in due season; luxurious to rejoice in the pleasures of sight, in decorative arts, dress, pictures; music is a luxury; luxuries are the works of skilled handicraftsmen, which can be aped but never equalled by a machine; flowers and scents are luxuries; so is swift travel, so is the enjoyment of scenery, art, science, civilisation; the variety of human activities is a luxury, for the lower animals (in their virtuous sobriety) have but one movement always the same for each sense—or if there is any change in the movement, which is probable, the change is so slow that the movement seems unchanged. Lower animals know nothing of diversity, of a heaping-up of aptitudes; man alone is luxurious."

Luxurious is the effort we make, lustful if you will, to have a life that shall be more generous, better filled, more exuberant. In this sense the Christian religion is self-consistent when it condemns luxury or concupiscence, an exaltation of the joys of earthly life at the cost of that heavenly kingdom which mortals are so apt to forget. It agrees with Gourmont when it includes gluttony among the seven deadly sins, and in its wholesale condemnation of bodily pleasures, scents, colours, etc., since these are but various objects of man's lustful desires when he reaches out towards the intoxication of the senses. Is not this an additional reason why anyone who rejects the Christian ethic should legitimise and organise such enquiries as the present one?



The condemnation of lust, concupiscence, or luxury is typical of the conflict between ourselves and the inheritors of the Judeo-Christian tradition. We, therefore, should counter by rejecting the very terms when used in this opprobrious sense.

I have pointed out elsewhere that when people speak of "pleasure" without qualification, sexual pleasure is often meant. The anti-sexual fanatics go one better by speaking of *vice* in the same restricted sense, for when they use the term without prefixing an adjective they always mean sexual enjoyment outside the restrictions of their code. Such is the linguistic usage of the moralists who adopt the Judeo-Christian doctrine of sin. That doctrine specifies the sinfulness of fornication, and is indeed opposed to pleasure as such, pleasure being assimilated to evil. [An English historian wrote: "The puritan hated bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators" (Macaulay, *History*, Vol. I, Chap. III).] To use words which, in ordinary parlance, are applied to the worst of man's actions, and to use them as if (without further explanation) they meant sexual manifestations—this is one of the most ingenious devices of prohibitionist policy. Even the shrewdest may be tricked by the familiar associations of speech. Thus when they write "vice"—without being aware, if they are enfranchised laymen, that this only connotes the Judeo-Christian idea of "sin"—they are brought up with a jar against all the sexual implications of the word, and writhe in their impotence.

The word "vice" has thus been rendered practically unmeaning. If the anti-sexual moralists, when they use it, mean "coitus", they must consider their own parents to have been vicious, since they themselves have come into the world. If, on the other hand, they only mean coitus when performed by those who have not received the official license, they make virtue strangely dependent upon rites which vary with time and place. Is it not childish to

consider the same physiological function honourable or not according as the attendant formalities are modified? When they speak of vice, the anti-sexualists are doing so in order to denounce sexual pleasure as illegitimate. The word is used as an anathema, being a lay term to replace the ecclesiastical word "sin", which has religious implications likely to affront ordinary mortals. The critic who abides by the principles of sexual legitimacy is entitled to reject the stigma. He will not consider "vicious" those who have merely satisfied their sexual desires, and, when he wants to appreciate their social value, he will use other standards of propriety. He will reserve commendation on the ground of "decency" for those who are genuinely moral, and will consider "indecent" those who do harm to the life or property of a neighbour. The "morality" which leads people to spy upon the beds of their fellow-citizens has caused innumerable misfortunes, poisoning the existence of good and worthy persons who have been called black sheep in doctrinaire societies merely for the free but harmless gratification of their sexual impulses; it has ruthlessly broken careers by classing intelligent and generous specimens of our race among criminals; while, on the other hand, injuring mankind by giving a free run to alleged virtues (meaning behaviour conformable with the sexual taboos), under cover of which rancorous old maids are able to vent their narrowness and spite.

Like vice, *obscenity* is no more than a word adroitly minted by prohibitionists that they may more easily decry legitimate enjoyment. Nature knows nothing of obscenity; or if she does, then everything is obscene, and especially the cohabitation which is an essential preliminary to procreation and therefore to the formation of social groups. We have to accept sexual intercourse, if our race is to continue. If obscenity exists, then love itself is obscene—even that love which is classed as legitimate, and which the anti-sexual moralists admire and extol. Those sweet lovers and those

tender young married couples about whom the poet and the moralist wax enthusiastic are merely persons who aspire (at length, having rid themselves of repression and shame) to realise obscenities two by two. The word "love" tries to hide the reality, but does not succeed in humbugging anyone, nor does the use of the terms "heart" or "hand" to symbolise other organs more necessary and more desirable. What is called obscenity is no more than an arbitrary classification introduced by the prohibitionists, who affix this label to sexual acts they dislike because these transcend the prescribed limits. The stricter prohibitionists, if properly married, commit and make their wives commit the worst of obscenities behind closed doors. Obscenity, if it exists, is the daily bread of their households; it is calf's head promoted to the dignity of mock-turtle.

Who can define obscenity? Where does it begin, and where does it end? What is obscene for one person is not obscene for another. North America proscribes *Daphnis and Chloe*, or the books of Rabelais and Boccaccio which are the delight of French and Italian men of letters. One who tries to draft a law which shall clear up the point, encounters insuperable difficulties, as was made plain in 1926 during the discussion of "obscene publications" by the Reichstag. The obscenities of print have never outclassed the obscenities of nature. That is why anti-sexual moralists are so confused, incoherent, and contradictory in their denunciations of obscenity. No one can maintain that it exists unless he is ready to proscribe as unlawful and obscene the sexual organs and the sexual act. Otherwise the legal definition of obscenity is nothing more than a biased interpretation of things and actions essentially legitimate. But this means that there is no such thing as obscenity.

A rationalist critic must be equally ready to denounce the absurdity of talking about *defilement* where sexual pleasure is concerned. The effects of the use of the other sense-organs, their manifestations and their secretions, have

never been stigmatised as "defiling". No moral defilement or contamination or pollution results from eating, sleeping, blowing the nose, or even defaecation. They are physiological functions which have no bearing on morality properly so called. A prohibitionist craze must exist to make anyone attach the notion of defilement to the use of the genital organs or to their secretions. Besides, the use of these conventional labels is most arbitrary. If coitus and its accompanying secretions are morally unclean, then the *materfamilias* is as unclean as the courtesan—for purpose has nothing to do with the case. The fact is that the alkaline or acid secretions of this alleged defilement leave no permanent stain—unless it be a lasting pollution that they should achieve the reproduction of life. "Moralists" are responsible for the idea, and have carried their mania for labelling sensual manifestations so far that they declare certain children to be defiled because their parents neglected the official rite. The upshot is the lamentable social ostracism of "illegitimate" children which is one of the curses of western society.

Still keeping in the same category of ideas, we must protest against any attempt to distinguish between *bad conduct* and *good conduct* in accordance with a sexual criterion, and still more against the notion that for a girl to lose her virginity is a mark of bad conduct. Unquestionably bad is the behaviour of idlers, liars, thieves, brawlers. Why, then, should those who affirm the legitimacy of sexual acts be expected to declare "bad" young men or young women who freely obey the promptings of the sexual impulse and answer the call of nature while observing the elementary rules of kindness, decency, and straightforwardness? When the prohibitionists speak of a woman's *virtue* (and a puritan extends this idea to a man) they mean that she is a victim of repression, and will abstain from extra-conjugal sexual intercourse. Here there is a deliberate confusion, introduced and perpetuated by anti-sexual frenzy. The general sig-

nificance of the terms "good conduct" and "virtue" should be restored, remembering that the doctrines of legitimacy and sexual freedom imply that sexuality is beyond good and evil.

Here we reach the core of this disastrous misunderstanding which has so often been the despair of moralists. Michelet, writing *L'amour* and *La femme* in the middle of the nineteenth century, was amazed to find that so many courtesans are good women, sympathetic, kindly, and decent. His astonishment was rooted in a false criterion of decency. He was the slave of erroneous classifications. Many thoroughly bad men, such as the elder Cato, were acclaimed as virtuous because they respected numerous prohibitions and enforced them on others; whereas many persons of sterling character have been persecuted, reviled, made unhappy, goaded into rebellion, merely because, under guidance of reason or through intuition, they refused to esteem sexual abstinence a virtue.

*Debauchery*, again, in the sense given to it by anti-sexual moralists, is a no less faulty term. A "debauchee", for the purity fanatics, is one who, refusing to be bound by their prohibitions or having little inclination to restrict his love to one person, leads a sexual life that is calculated to supply him with the pleasure he prizes by association with sexual partners having the same tastes as his own. As soon as we admit that sexual acts are amoral, are beyond good and evil, this desire for change loses all moral complexion. It is a matter for individual preference, like taste in food. Certain societies may advocate monogamy for sociological rather than for moral reasons, but that is another story. To a rationalist it can have no bearing upon the moral standards which are appealed to in condemnation of one who shows an inclination for sexual variety.

Thus the doctrine of legitimacy and freedom implies the rejection of these derogatory terms, of the metaphorical use of such words as "filth", "slime", "muck", and "gutter"

to describe sexual activities unpleasing to the prohibitionists. For us, the would-be offensive terms mean nothing in this connexion.

We deprecate the unceasing propensity of puritans to apply the notions of *clean* and *unclean* to the sexual life. As for the current use, in folk-speech, of the names of sexual organs and functions as expletives and words of abuse, this is a mere survival of taboo and an effect of (sometimes a crude revolt against) repression. All such practices blur the idea of legitimacy and are a hindrance to the enjoyment of sexual freedom, since for those who accept the sexual taboo everything about sex is shocking; but for those who reject it, nothing. To the latter it seems inconceivable that anything in nature can be shocking, and least of all one of her greatest benefactions.

The necessary reform of our question-begging sexual vocabulary should go farther, reacting with the utmost energy against whatever in current speech is obviously inaccurate or grossly hypocritical. We have already seen that, far from showing "respect" for a woman by refraining from the proposal of mutual sex enjoyment, a man who makes such a proposal compliments a woman by showing his appreciation of her charms. Put it the other way about. Does a woman who offers herself to a man display a want of respect for him? The notion is instantly seen to be absurd. No less false is the idea that a woman shows "decency" or "propriety" by not giving herself to a man. Decent women, like decent men, are those who do not harm others.

Finally we must reject as false and childish all the condemnatory adjectives that drop so readily from the mouths or flow so venomously from the pens of anti-sexual fanatics who will hear nothing of the doctrine of legitimacy. I think of "odious", "ignoble", "revolting", "sickening", "disgusting", "dirty", etc. By anti-sexual campaigners, one and the same fact is benevolently described or is bespattered

with the foregoing choice epithets, according as the circumstances vary; according as it occurs in public or behind closed doors, under the aegis of marriage or extra-conjugally, and so on. These conventional distinctions, and the abusive epithets showered on women whose sexual activities are not covered by the benison of marriage, betray a stupid submission to the mouthings of prohibitionists.

Let us protest against the description of sexual enjoyment as "gross" or "coarse". These are but fresh weapons from the anti-sexual arsenal, forged by those whose main purpose it is to decry what man seeks more earnestly than any other object of desire, by those who are impotent for unrestrained enjoyment, incapable of recognising the lawfulness of pleasure. Their classifications are fallacious, and they insist upon comparing things which are on different planes. The truth is that sexual pleasure is thoroughly human, very much alive; and that the only "coarseness" in nature is put there by man's prejudices.

The champions of sexual freedom will, then, be ready with a carefully chosen and truthful rejoinder to the anti-sexual vocabulary, which is such a nosegay of insults and false implications. Freedom of speech upon sexual matters is a logical consequence of freedom of action. No one need now hesitate to declare his faith in the principles of legitimacy, or to illustrate them by examples, or to talk naturally about natural things. We shall refuse to be muzzled in deference to the prudery of those who would like to prevent our naming, describing, and using the genital organs, and to suppress all literary references to their functions. This demand of the shamefaced is as unwarrantable as the others they put forward. Everyone knows, moreover, that the demand is habitually evaded in allusive songs, after-dinner stories, and so on. But we sexual libertarians intend to evade it openly and frankly, to defy it. We shall not accept the taboos of those who "send the girls

out of the room" before they venture to speak freely, or of those whose books are such as "will not make anyone blush".

Our forefathers were not afraid of plain words. Like Chaucer and Rabelais, centuries before Thomas Bowdler was born, they wrote and uttered their thoughts without mincing. "No woman, even when as wise and refined as was the Marchioness of Rambouillet, then dreamed . . . of being shocked by language which was considered natural rather than loose." (Emile Henriot.) The very idea of the "shocking" was introduced by the puritans, for even in England it did not exist before the days of Queen Elizabeth. Notwithstanding the injunctions of official morality, these good ancestors of ours were still close to nature, from whom our circumlocutions have estranged us to an absurd degree. They were shrewd enough to call things and functions by their real names. Besides, the fate of "polite" euphemisms shows the folly of the prudes. When such a term has been in use for a few years, it is proscribed, and a neologism takes its place. Witness the succession "privy—closet—W.C.—lavatory—toilet", and what not.

C. Letourneau writes somewhere, concerning the tortures which Indian squaws used to inflict upon prisoners: "Some of them were of such a nature that only in Latin can we speak of them before a civilised audience (*genitalia excidunt*)."

Since 1903, when Letourneau wrote, we have forgotten much of our Latin, but—largely thanks to Freud—have made a considerable advance in the art of calling things by their names. *Lady Chatterley's Lover* may have helped a good many writers to say what they mean without dropping into Latin; and where Letourneau used Latin, they would have written frankly: "The squaws cut off the prisoners' genital organs." For, as A. Malraux justly remarks in the preface to a new edition of Letourneau's book: "Words which seem offensive at first, cease to offend when they have been uttered a few times." We may add that the



offence is purely conventional, words which are freely used at one epoch ranking as offensive at another.

Nor does science escape these puerile evasions. At one time books and newspapers refused to mention the diseases classed as venereal. When pox became rife in sixteenth-century Europe (having probably been introduced from America), and Rabelais "put it into the news", "pox" is what he called it, as did his contemporaries. The eighteenth century, finding the word vulgar, began to speak of "syphilis". The nineteenth century was afraid of both the disease and its name, so Brieux refined the latter to "avarie"; and a hospital out-patient who is asked what he complains of, instead of saying "pox", "clap", or "chancre" as the case may be, will reply "the bad disorder". Now we are asked, in defiance of the scientific attitude of those who contemplate these maladies without artificial shame, to use the mouthful "treponemiasis" or "treponematosi". (C. S. Butler and E. Peterson.) We shall reach the dozenth appellation soon.

This anti-sexual terror of words gives birth to other follies. Literature becomes struthious. Some books print the banned words minus a letter or two, leaving them still plain enough, so that he who runs may read, and we wonder what modesty has gained by the omission. Another will print the initial followed by a dash, and the mind supplies the omission, so that the mutilated term is actually more conspicuous than if it had been printed in full as it would have been in the Middle Ages. "Arse" is still banned; but in recording school-boy talk a writer is almost permitted to say: "He fell arse-over-tip." A lawyer will tell the court (or at any rate the reporters will say he did): "Her husband infected her with a certain disease"—and every reader knows that one of the "venereal diseases" must be meant. Even reproduction, though accounted sacred, does not escape the periphrases of the mealy-mouthed. A woman with child is said to be "in an interesting condition", or to be "awaiting a happy

event". The very folk is corrupted by its "betters", and you may hear one good-wife say of another: "She is expecting". Sometimes the use of a foreign tongue confers distinction on words which would otherwise be "low". In October 1930, when the Empress of Japan was with child, Reuter cabled: "It is formally announced that the Empress is enceinte. The accouchement is expected in March." Bertrand Russell tells us that "it is permissible, with certain precautions, to speak in print of coitus, but it is not permissible to employ the monosyllabic synonym of this word. That has been decided in the case of *Sleeveless Errand*." (*Proceedings of the Sexual Reform Congress*, 1929, p. 402.) I need hardly point out that a great deal of intellectual, moral, and social energy has to be wasted over these stilted ways of walking round the point. Some, who are easily satisfied, seem to think they represent the pith and marrow of civilisation. Man is fool enough to plume himself on his childishness, to value the irrational applause it evokes, thinking himself superior because he thus makes faces at reality. The harlequinade will be over as soon as the human beast has learned to use language in order to call everything by its right name.

The champions of legitimacy will refuse to follow the timid prohibitionists into this maze, or to accept their faith that anyone is entitled to regard himself as a superior being because he does not call a spade a spade. The restoration to common usage of precise terms for sexual acts and organs, is the necessary complement of legitimacy, and one of the most elementary requisites of sexual freedom.

Akin to this reform of our vocabulary is a reform which will make an end of idiotic jokes about sexual acts. Some fancy themselves free spirits because they do not share St. Paul's or St. Jerome's morbid hatred of women and sex life; and yet they like to show, instead, that they are capable of coarse witticisms. In truth, far from proving enfranchisement, this merely indicates that they are much less free

than they imagine. There is nothing funny about the sexual act. It is a legitimate and beneficial manifestation, and is therefore eminently worthy of respect. Vulgar raillery of sex is the feeble effort of those who want to show that they are not purity fanatics, but who really know nothing about sexual reform, and think they must affirm themselves against the anti-sexuals by taking a light and airy view of sex. They should be told that the only attitude proper to a sexual reformer is to avoid making personal remarks upon a neighbour's sexual behaviour, for in no other way can a man avoid being led into the thankless task of passing vain judgments.

One more observation to close this chapter. Genuine sexual reform advances with giant strides. If we are not mistaken, D. H. Lawrence's book *Lady Chatterley's Lover* marks enormous progress. It affirms the right to treat sexual topics without special precautions, and to record in black upon white their bearing on current thought. Not long ago, someone wrote: "We should never dare to publish a lover's conversation unbowdlerised, or even what is said about sexual matters in a private circle of friends; such things are continually being spoken, but we may not write them down." D. H. Lawrence's book abandons the old rules of the game, and we cannot fail to regard its having been printed in England and published unexpurgated in France (1932) as the Sexual Revolution's Declaration of Rights. To convince the reader of the distance gained, I will remind him that little more than two generations ago, during the Second Empire, Flaubert's cautious *Madame Bovary* was made the object of a public prosecution.

## CHAPTER IV

### MESSAGE OF SEXUAL FREEDOM

Message of Sexual Freedom.—Positive Rules of Sexual Freedom.—Therapeutic Effects of Sexual Freedom.—Sexual Freedom as a Means for preventing the Use of Artificial Stimulants.—Nudism.

*Message of Sexual Freedom.*—It would be a big mistake to suppose that the champions of legitimacy want to incite anyone to perform the sexual act. They are equally uninterested in the abstinence which is the rule of the chaste, the frequent repetition which is that of the insatiable, and the moderation which commends itself to the advocates of the golden mean. They leave people to fit their expenditure to their own incomes, while pointing out that excess will cause disaster. Indeed they are quite unconcerned as to particular facts, their essential criterion of progress both individual and social being indifference towards private sexual acts—indifference on the part of individuals and indifference on the part of the State—provided always that the rule against infringing the equal rights of others is duly respected. They do not fail to recognise that there are uterines among women and orchitics among men (for these types see *Sex Life and Sex Ethics*, pp. 14–19) in whom the sexual needs are probably minimal. Such persons must not be forced into activities contrary to their inclinations, but they in their turn should not try to make their peculiarities a law for all the world, and more especially they should not condemn clitorids among women and phallics among men (same reference) for having more extensive needs than themselves. In a word, if sexual libertarians make no complaint of those who prefer the doctrine of an imbecile

moral code, they claim for themselves and for others of their way of thinking the incontestable right to disregard that code and to develop their own personalities in a reasonable way.

No other policy will enable us to achieve the first stage of sexual reform—sexual toleration throughout human society. This will be followed by the adoption of social formulas which, under a system less blind, less crazy, and less hate-ridden than our own, will enable us to establish more reasonable sexual institutions. It is probable that a libertarian regime would bring about the spontaneous disappearance of the now widely prevalent lack of balance due to the censorship, of enervation resulting from repression, of the frustrate excitement of continence, of the exasperation due to the dominant anti-sexual regime.

The fundamental object of sexual freedom is to restore sexual acts of whatever kind to the domain of private life, subject only to laws which shall allow free exercise to the harmless will of the persons concerned, protecting them from the malicious interpretation and meddling of prohibitionists.

The aim, then, must be to revise laws and customs, and to revolt against the Puritan Terror which, refusing to admit the legitimacy of sexual acts, persecutes people of good will and good behaviour by ostracising them socially and by inflicting excessive and unwarrantable punishments.

Sexual freedom is the message issued to all those who are weary of fierce denunciations, of rumbustious inquisitions, of equivocal campaigns, of impertinent speculations as to whether a girl has lost her virginity, of ostracisms pronounced against a civil servant or an employee for having married this woman or slept with that one, in a word of the whole paraphernalia of purity fanaticism with its prying interference and its prohibitionist legislation; the message of all those who would like to introduce a rationalist sexual policy, liberated from the commandments that are so pusillanimously accepted, from ukases based on meta-

physical considerations and upon arrogant contempt for criticism. It announces the close of a system, and heralds the dawn of a new one which, having revised the rules, will introduce more joy, ease, and freedom into life. It will put an end to the absurd exaggerations which have become current in so many societies ruled by fanatical and turbulent doctrinaires, have been committed by so many religions and so many philosophies, so many governments obsessed by this matter of sex relations and attaching undue importance to them. It is the message which invites you to be less foolish in your sexual life, to regulate that life yourself instead of having it dictated to you by your neighbours, to guide it by science instead of by convention, and to accept vital truths instead of covering them with extinguishers.

Freud once wrote: "People without professional experience find it hard to realise how large a proportion of modern men and women have no means of procuring normal sexual gratification." But this truth is becoming widely known. Recent researches, now that the conventional barriers against them have been lifted, have shown the hope which animates the hearts of these despairing slaves. Having surveyed their condition, they realise that they have been unjustly treated. To all such, the message of sexual legitimacy and sexual freedom comes as a deliverer, saying: "You can throw off your shackles." It teaches us to admit the right to sexual indulgence at any age, shows that sexual acts are important for the old and the young, and convinces us that principles must not be accepted when they fly in the face of plain facts.

Finally, the message of sexual freedom is not addressed to underlings only. It should be heeded no less carefully by persons in leading positions. Modern statesmen have given far too little attention to the need for a rationalist and tolerant sexual policy, one which shall satisfy everyone, so that in this respect the nation may have no bad blood,

no enmity, no uneasiness. Personally indifferent to the various creeds, and firmly convinced that the State must remain neutral in these matters, they have been remiss in their easy-going acceptance of the doctrine of carnal sin, which they have not troubled either to examine or to discuss. From hebetude or from fear they have neglected to defend the writers courageous enough to tear the veil of ignorance with which the purity fanatics surround themselves; and when these so-called moralists raise the clamour of "Sacrilege", the constituted authorities have even joined in the hue and cry against the pioneers, accusing them of depravity. Statesmen, then, will be recalled to their duty by the message of sexual freedom, will be reminded that they have to favour progressive thought as against the reactionaries, or that they should at least show themselves neutral in a matter where freedom of conscience is as much in place as in the domain of philosophical opinions or in that of political views.

Sexual activity permeates the world, whether we approve or not. Legitimacy and the mechanistic theory of sex teach us not to take the fact amiss, and indeed to be delighted at the consequent general diffusion of happiness. But society is at present so organised that there is a great deal of attendant misery, for people are harassed and hunted, often destroyed, when they infringe the sexual taboo. The establishment of sexual freedom will make an end of this grave drawback, by ensuring that legitimate and natural actions shall no longer be followed by the results which the conventions of dunces have artificially attached to them.

I have already shown (*Sex Life and Sex Ethics*, pp. 61-62) that in freer lands than ours, amorous advances which western prohibitionists regard as infamous and insulting are welcomed as complimentary. When we have established sexual freedom here, this natural state of affairs will replace the present artificial one. An offer of sexual intimacy freely made, may be as freely declined. The desire manifested by the person who makes the offer may be subdued. The

indication of it may be ignored. But the sign of the profound and widespread conviction of sexual legitimacy will be that such an offer, the manifestation of such a desire, will not be regarded as an insult, will not be made the occasion for the hysterical protests, the turbulent denunciations, they now arouse from anti-sexual fanatics. When our western women have learned this wise toleration, they will no longer appear, as they now appear in contrast with the women of the East, to be mere dolls in their sexual reactions—so dully mechanical that many men who have known the women of the East lose all further interest in those of the West. Even here, indeed, we find women who, untamable by nature or immune to repression or convinced rationalists, have remained free from a guilt complex in matters of sex or have emancipated themselves from the idea that there can be anything sinful in sexual relations. We can best serve them by emphasising the fact that their attitude is only anomalous in a society where sexual freedom has itself hitherto been regarded as an anomaly, has been classed with crime or madness, and that they may congratulate themselves on having discarded artifice to recover natural spontaneity.

It may happen, in anti-sexual societies, that a girl will be so much under the harrow of repression and the censorship (or, if you like to phrase it thus, will be so confirmed a victim of the diathesis of chastity which is the tangible outcome of repression and the censorship) as to break off an engagement to marry because she considers her betrothed's attempts to caress her "improper". Such an outlook is the precise opposite of that which prevails among peoples who have not been unbalanced by repression and the censorship, so that advances of the before-mentioned kind are accepted by women as a compliment to their charms. These are differences of opinion with regard to the very same acts, the opinions in one case resulting from a natural and in the other from an artificial education. How



great, then, will be the deliverance for mankind when the natural education shall have become universal.

Finally, the immediate aim of the champions of legitimacy must be to put an end to the persecution of those who enter into extra-conjugal sexual relations, and who, if we do not react against the prohibitionist reign of terror, will continue to be treated like common criminals. Puritanical legislation has aimed at putting private life under perpetual puritan control. Such laws claim an unwarrantable and intolerable right of supervising and meddling in private affairs. We learn from the doctrine of legitimacy that they are utterly unjust.

It must be obvious that the regime of sexual freedom will entail a great physiological reform. The rules of our present society, as far as sexual matters are concerned, are continually at war with the sexual impulse, endeavouring to impose repression upon all. Under sexual freedom this disastrous warfare will come to an end. Instead, the gratification of sexual desire will be easy and healthful, being prohibited neither by moral condemnation nor by social taboos.

Sexual freedom ought to be the natural and undeniable reward of all who do their duty, simply because they have done it. In extant society, the precise opposite happens.

Consider our young people upon whom civilisation imposes titanic efforts in the way of study. Substantially, they are incarcerated, while sexual pleasure, which would give them relaxation, would redouble their energies, and would make life a joy, is strictly forbidden, repressed, banned. Consider the workers who must toil for long hours at joyless tasks. Consider the intellectuals who spend their time upon arduous researches, and the statesmen who have difficult questions to decide. If, when their day's labour is done, they seek legitimate sexual pleasure, they are spied upon, tracked down, and reviled. Take, for example, Leopold II, King of the Belgians. This great and clear-sighted ruler, a consistent utilitarian who gave his country an empire

which Rome might have envied, was for a long time known to the public only because his extra-conjugal relations were considered "scandalous". They were carped at and made the topic of music-hall songs. At length death, which puts things in their place and allots impartial justice, made an end of this servants'-hall gossip, and restored sanity of judgment. It became clear that a man's sexual life is a private affair, and has no bearing on his genius, his intelligence, his honesty, his straightforwardness. Would it not be well to admit the fact before people are dead, and to give them when living the advantages of this truth?

Eastern civilisations have for ages been successful in establishing a formula that effected a happy compromise between work and sexual pleasure, not upsetting the balance (as we do in the West) in the attempt to make work alone matter. Who will deny the intelligence, the capacity, the activity, the industry, of the sovereigns, the statesmen, the high officials who, whether Aryans or Semites, for centuries were in successful charge of the East from the Mediterranean to the confines of the Mongolian realms? Now these were all persons who enjoyed vigorous sexual activity. Having spent their days at work, they passed their evenings dallying with pretty girls whose numbers were not restricted by any monogamic code. Mankind had discovered a reasonable formula, but the doctrine of continence has swept it away, to proclaim the melancholy principles of a castrated society. North America, where "sex appeal" is mainly regarded as something which produces undesirable complications and causes temptations that must be rigorously repressed, permits—with regret and tortured resignation—occasional glimpses of the joys of a sexual order different from its own. In theatrical productions and on the screen we again and again encounter the symbolical figure of the sheik, the pasha, the sultan, the vizier, in a word of the Oriental potentate who has unlimited sexual gratification and a perpetually renewed supply of women. The sheik, in fact,

is the precise opposite of Babbitt, of a man who can never satisfy his desires fully, but gropes unceasingly in search of satisfaction till death snatches him away as he bitterly reminds himself that life held other possibilities, which he renounced, to his own frustration and for the greater glory of a chimera. For the American cinema public, the sheik and his environment are like children's dreams of a country where the walls of the cottages are made of almond-icing and the rivulets are flowing with treacle. But children's fancies are such stuff as dreams are made of, whereas their elders are fools enough to make fancies into a hideous reality.

It is because sex relations are in truth beyond good and evil, are amoral, that so many statesmen popularly stigmatised as dissolute are nevertheless exceedingly good at their job. By one of the caprices of modern democracy, under which a conception of "morality" whose metaphysical postulates have long since been rejected is still in full force, estimable "presidents of the Republic" who have been elected for four, six, or seven years have, throughout their term of office, to live as if they were eunuchs, and to content themselves with paternal kisses to little girls at a school prize-giving. The statesmen of former days, unless they were prematurely affected by the modern anti-sexual paranoia, preserved and used their sexual freedom. They would conquer a world, organise it, maintain its mastery, issue wise and valuable decrees—without, for that, thinking it incumbent on them to renounce the joys of sex as a due reward for their responsibility and their labour. "Everything has its time" was their motto; but this had, as complement, "there is time for everything". That which modern morality denounces as misuse, is in most instances a proper use, since there is no warrant for proscribing sexual freedom.

The doctrine of the champions of legitimacy is as follows: "From you, men and women alike, work is demanded, work fruitful to the commonwealth. That is essential. But pro-

vided you fulfil this requirement, society will not curtail your sexual freedom. So long as you do not resort to force, you can indulge your sexual impulse in any way you like, and no one will enquire into your preferences or your tastes. If you introduce this policy of freedom into the gaol in which you have hitherto been confined, mankind will be rejuvenated, will begin to live anew, will redouble its efforts because its joys will be redoubled, and will perhaps be able to stop its descent of the slippery slope of degeneration, once the shackles of sterile convention have been cast off.

Aldous Huxley recommends us to make people live in two water-tight compartments. In one of these compartments they will be industrial workers; in the other, human beings. They will be idiots, or machines, for eight hours out of the twenty-four; live men and women for the rest of the day. No doubt this is written with sardonic humour, but there is also sound sense in the notion. If anything of the sort is to become possible, when a citizen's work is done the laws and society must not arrogate the right of enquiring into or interfering with his or her private life. Theophrastus of Ephesus remarked that love is the passion of people who have nothing to do. Obviously, leisure facilitates the search for sexual pleasure; and modern statesmen or business magnates are probably little affected by laws or customs which seek to forbid it, since there is scant room for leisure in their much occupied lives. Still, this is a bad allotment of time, and we should strive to have a sufficiency of pleasure as well as a sufficiency of work, each at its appointed hour.

Attempts to solve the sexual problem by prohibition, restriction, and depreciation have led only, in all nations, to multiple conflicts, between woman and man, the family and the child, the individual and society. Most of our social discomfort is the outcome of an anti-sexual policy. The champions of sexual freedom propose to replace the method which has failed by one that will be expressly physiological, purged of metaphysical and would-be moral poison. Those

who, clinging to traditionalism, dread this new system could not do better than console themselves by remembering that hitherto prohibitionism has caused nothing but harm. The new order must be accepted willy-nilly as the only remedy for the ills that have resulted from anti-sexualism. Surely persons of good faith must admit that, since the policy of sexual coercion has failed and has eventuated in prohibitionist tyranny, the time has come to give sexual freedom a trial? It could not possibly lead to anything worse than what we now have to endure.

To-day, when the moral and material disasters caused by an anti-sexual policy based on religious principles are continually increasing, we see leagues and associations springing up everywhere to seek a remedy. Their members make a headlong onslaught upon the problems of marriage, prostitution, or birth-control, as the case may be, and despairingly admit that, after much talk, they have found nothing satisfactory. The reason for their failure is simple. Nearly always they are unwilling to break away from the false principles of anti-sexual morality as dominant in the West, the very principles which are the root of the mischief. They try, from mere inertia or from respect for tradition, to hold fast to anti-sexualism while at the same time they hope to escape its pernicious consequences. The attempt is foredoomed to failure. The sole remedy for the sexual troubles of the western world is a radical revision of the false principles that have led to them.

The champions of sexual freedom are firmly convinced that, under the harsh economic conditions of modern times, the human race can only achieve a tolerable existence by means of unconditional liberty in sexual matters, and by scrapping the policy of inquisition and prohibition now pursued so fanatically and maladroitly by the anti-sexuals and the governments of which they have the ear.

*Positive Rules of Sexual Freedom.*—If we wish to state the laws in accordance with which the champions of sexual

freedom would like to regulate the sexual life in its essence and its principles, basing these laws on what has gone before, we may do so in conformity with the positive rules formulated in *Sex Life and Sex Ethics* regarding the legitimacy (morality) of sexual acts (pp. 130-131).

1. *Sexual freedom must be provided with a rock-bottom foundation by a deliberate adhesion to the doctrine and the principles of the legitimacy of sexual acts, this implying the conquest of repression and the censorship.*

2. *We must apply to sexual acts the principles of the mechanistic theory; that is to say, the idea that the sexual object does not form a necessary part of the appreciation or performance of a sexual act, every mechanical realisation being a sufficient end in itself.*

3. *We must never admit that sexual relations are blameworthy, so long as they do not imply the use of force upon a non-consenting party. On the contrary, we must assure ourselves and others that sexual acts are fully legitimate and perfectly avowable, that there is nothing immoral or shameful about them, and that they are entirely compatible with human dignity, which can never be impaired by the fulfilment of natural law. To affirm sexual need is no more ridiculous than to affirm chastity, being equally honourable.*

4. *We must strenuously contest the idea that there can be anything degrading in having freely performed a sexual act.*

5. *We must unhesitatingly be prepared to perform sexual acts with due deference to the rights of others (the question of adultery as a possible breach of contract will be considered in the next volume of this series), their only purpose being to secure one of the most desirable, most refined, and most legitimate of human pleasures, and one which is an end in itself. Nor must we ever consider the offer of or the demand for a sexual act as offensive, for it is a compliment.*

6. *By our behaviour and in our speech we should ensure that sexual manifestations shall become as much a matter of course as*

*those of any other physiological function; for we should never consider a sexual act (of whatever kind) abnormal or extraordinary.*

7. *We should never regard a sexual act as a moral danger, for such a view is in line with ancestral taboos, and we should substitute the view that a sexual act and its consequences are beyond good and evil.*

8. *We must never hold abstinence from sexual acts to be a mark of superiority.*

9. *No sexual act may have linked with it the notion of honour, propriety, good conduct, etc. These ideas cannot apply to the bodily organs and their physiological manifestations, which are amoral or beyond good and evil.*

10. *The frequency and the character of sexual acts are matters for individual regulation, for personal hygiene, as are the activities of all the other bodily functions.*

11. *We should make it our business to ignore the sexual life of others, this being the best way for avoiding the temptation of passing judgment upon others; and we must recognise that no one can be called to account by another or by the State for his sexual activities, provided no act of violence has been done.*

12. *A tranquil, contented, and happy life will be secured by the free, easy, and frank performance of sexual acts. The dread which their performance or the thought of them inspires in certain persons is the outcome of an aberration arising out of artificial conventions or as the effect of repression.*

*Therapeutic Effects of Sexual Freedom.*—Sexual enjoyment is not merely legitimate. We may affirm, for proof is superfluous, that it is one of the most exquisite forms of pleasure known to man. True superiority is shown by indulging in it. It is beneficial to health (always promoted by happiness), when the rules of hygiene and the canons of the art proper to sex are duly observed. I need not insist here that sexual

excess may cause illness or death, for the same applies to the immoderate use of any of our senses or functions.

The sexual life is of enormous importance because, under the artificial conditions of modern civilisation, it has become our sole means of entering into direct communion with nature. When else are we natural beings? Our days are spent in strange occupations, variously categorised, but all designed to favour the working of that great machine which civilisation has substituted for nature. Our actions are pre-arranged, our words are weighed, our minutes are docketed. There is but one instant when men or women are themselves, when they seem to awaken from a dream, to be transfigured, to blossom as it were, and that is when the sexual caress, putting convention to flight, restores us to life and makes us see what it really is.

We must, then, declare sexual freedom to be the true remedy for psychopathic disorders caused by repression and the censorship, the only hope for the waifs and derelicts who have been bled white by sexual neurosis, the sole antidote to the poison which sexual taboos have poured drop by drop into their veins. Continence, with the resultant accumulation of the secretions of the reproductive glands, induces toxaemia, causing neuroses and loss of mental balance. We can rest assured, therefore, that we shall make people healthy, well-balanced, and happy in addition, if we enable them to satisfy their sexual desires normally, regardless of the kind of sexual act they prefer. Having given himself up to sexual enjoyment without stint, one who has become a disciple of the doctrine of legitimacy secures not only gratification but refreshment. Being neither tormented nor brutalised by the idea of defilement which haunts the anti-sexual's mind, he regains mastery over his nerves, is equipped with fresh vitality, works with renewed ardour, is again reconciled to life. His legitimate passion, having had its hours of expansion and fulfilment, leaves his energies intact when he wants to devote himself to the other



activities of life. His physiological and mental equilibrium, far from being disturbed by his sexual experiences (as the slaves of prohibitionism would have us believe), is restored by the judicious utilisation of all his biological forces, now that one of these is no longer annihilated and reviled to the alleged advantage but real detriment of the others.

A primary requisite of happiness is escape from sexual obsession, in which, through frustration, symbols are substituted for the forbidden acts. This is what happened in the cases described by Freud of patients who, suffering from privation, had recourse to "substitutive symbols", sometimes as a means of gratification, sometimes as a means of repression. Thus one patient "removes watches and clocks from the room, hoping by this magical rite to escape having nocturnal erections". A woman "tries to prevent the fall and smashing of vases, thinking that this will enable her to preserve her virginity". I have already expressed my opinion that psycho-analysis will not alone suffice to cure obsessional neuroses which are verging on mania. The acceptance of the doctrine of sexual legitimacy is the only cure, for it severs the roots of the malady. We must put an end to privation; but first of all we shall have to rid the patient of the whole train of conventional disparagements and absurd threats which have induced privation; and as a preliminary we must bring the patient into touch once more with nature by cutting the artificial bonds of censorship and repression. If by conquering repression and the censorship we establish a system of sexual freedom, a radical cure will ensue. Psycho-analysis here is no more than a palliative, and will probably be followed by relapse. Those alone who, fully convinced of the legitimacy of their sexual desire, cease to strive against its gratification—they alone escape the torments, the disquietudes, the "pangs of conscience" which disorder the health and waste the time of the unfortunate neurotic. The more effectually repression has been conquered, the more fully the patient has accepted

the mechanistic theory of the legitimacy of sexual acts, the less likelihood will there be of "substitutive symbolism", and the less often shall we encounter abnormal beings burdened with one of the ceremonials that reveal sexual neurosis. The more intense the sexual life, the better satisfied are we with existence. The more one gives free rein to one's natural desires, subject only to the restraints of a rationalist hygiene, but refusing to renounce one's rights in deference to reputedly "moral" dictates, the better and longer will the vital forces be preserved. Casanova reached the ripe age of seventy-three.

A sexual act performed adequately and with a sense of complete satisfaction is a vital stimulus (as Guyau admirably phrases it) and is essential to euphoria. When excessively frequent, no doubt it leads to exhaustion and has to be paid for like any other physiological excess. But when sexual desire is frustrated or when its gratification is entirely prevented, as happens in many modern States under prohibitionist dominion, the physiological or psychological balance is completely upset, and euphoria becomes impossible, so that lack of sexual indulgence proves no less harmful than sexual excess. Thus the anti-sexuals whose campaigns tend to discredit the sexual act and to put obstacles in the way of its performance are, in the opposite way, no less harmful to the healthy functioning of individuals and therefore of society than the excesses of certain persons are harmful to themselves.

It would appear that regular and even copious sexual enjoyment tends to keep the genital organs active and vigorous until life is far advanced. This is the logical counterpart of the atrophy which is often noticed in abstainers. Sulpicius reports that in St. Martin, famous for his privations and macerations (devoutly styled austerities), the penis was found after death to be so much shrunken "that the organ would never have been detected, had not the observers known where to look for it". This gem

is quoted by Dr. Richard Millant, in his *Les eunuques à travers les âges*, p. 32. The occurrence of such an atrophy, greatly prized by religious maniacs, justifies us in expecting that regular use of the organ will have the contrary effect, keeping it in good condition and maintaining its size.

How could we expect anything else? If every change in the sexual partner leads to fresh excitement, then sexual pleasure, being a direct function of the stimulus, will naturally be increased. Nay more, we shall find that neurasthenic impotence can often be relieved by this sovereign remedy, the neurasthenia disappearing as well as the impotence when interest in life is reawakened by the caresses of a new and attractive woman. This is the best cure for the neuroses, especially for those which are due to prolonged abstinence and excessive continence; as in young bachelors, husbands whose wives have long ceased to exert any sex appeal, old men, etc. *Mutatis mutandis*, the same is true of the sexual impulse in women.

I need hardly dwell upon the primary therapeutic value of sexual freedom. It is obvious when we compare the poise of men and women who have wholeheartedly espoused the doctrine of sexual freedom with that of persons whose main occupation seems to be to combat sexual freedom in themselves and others. Libertarians enjoy a natural, healthy life, which promotes bodily development, and, on the moral side, helps them to escape the horrors of migrains and the neuroses. Abstainers, on the other hand, are a prey to unceasing erotic preoccupations which harass them to such an extent that they can no longer enjoy life and frequently fall sick. Between the two groups there is the same sort of difference that we see between the well-to-do, on the one hand, who have the advantages of an abundant and appetising diet, and the poverty-stricken, on the other, whose food is of poor quality, insufficient, and unattractive. In sex life, as in nutrition, there is an implacable contrast between living and vegetating. To vegetate is the lot of one

whose existence is incomplete, because he is unwilling or unable to appreciate life. The penalty is, not only the uncompensated forfeiture of the incomparable pleasures which sex can bring (and that is deplorable enough), but also a grave upset of the whole physiological balance.

Between the victim of repression and the person who has adopted and acts upon the doctrine of sexual freedom, there is a great gulf fixed.

The former is constantly spying upon himself and others. His head is stuffed with sonorous phrases about sin, chastity, and modesty. He watches his words and actions, lest there should be any unconsciously dictated by sexual desire—like the girls in the Convent of the Birds who were forbidden to separate their legs. He can glimpse possibilities of enjoyment, like lightning flashes in the night, but firmly closes his dazzled eyes. For him the sexual act is a shameful interlude, after which he hides like a thief. There ensues a long period of hesitancy, covetousness, calculation, and even, if his mind is dominated by prohibitionist ideas, remorse. He burns with shame because, in defiance of his artificial discipline, he has given nature free rein. Pining amid his gloomy occupations and his stifled ambitions, he is always wondering what his neighbours think of him, is wounded by an allusion or a furtive glance, eager to be respected by the puritans of the town, and sedulous to reduce his mentality to the dull level of theirs. Thus he grows old in the prison-house of anti-sexual prejudices, tramping wearily along the monotonous, flat, and dusty road of a blighted life. He will never learn the thrill of crossing tempestuous seas or climbing lofty mountains. When death claims him, he may think himself content, but in the depths he will be embittered because he has lost all in order to stand in the good books of the old maids of the Vigilance Society who will escort to the tomb the remains of the poor wretch, at length escaped from their narrow world.

The adept of legitimacy and sexual freedom glides through

life as a sailing-boat skims across the ocean when running freely before the wind. He is ready for all the possibilities of sex experience, culling them like sweet-scented flowers as he passes. They are the natural ornaments of his existence, of his dwelling. Their perfume and the fleshy sweetness of their petals, when these flowers are renewed day after day, bring him consolation, friendship, support in the difficult moments of existence. Difficulties vanish or are lessened because he can always look forward to the next hour of delight. Every being of the other sex may offer possibilities of pleasure; when she appears on the scene, she is pursued with an ardour which is continually freshened; if he wins her, she will be the reward of a glorious hunt. The apostle of sex enfranchisement proceeds from joy to joy, scarcely marking how he crushes beneath his triumphant feet the anger, the hatred, yes, the unavowed envy, of the rancorous prohibitionists who are dissatisfied with themselves and with everything in the world. He ignores them, for they belong to a different species. They grovel in the mire of chastity, which gets into their eyes and blinds them; whereas he, aspiring, craves with all his energies for space, the scents of nature, the light and the glory of creative movement.

Choice? At bottom it is the choice between truth and falsehood, and we hear the fracas of the age-long struggle they carry on under cover of religion and philosophy. It is the choice between murderous convention and immortal nature. It is the choice between the gods of light on the one hand and the gods of darkness on the other; the gods of hatred, jealousy, and resentment, so hostile and so deceptive that some have been inclined to wonder whether they are not, after all, the demons of the old world temporarily victorious and reappearing under a new mask.

I could quote numerous observations showing the direct therapeutic value of sexual intercourse. Lasses and lads who have pined—anaemic, chlorotic, melancholic, listless,

peevisish, tied to their mothers' apron-strings under the perpetual stress of repression and the censorship—have life renewed when at length set free to enjoy the fruit which has hitherto been forbidden. Therewith a blossoming of the personality ensues. I have seen it everywhere, but above all in the regions where no hindrances are imposed upon early sexual indulgence (Asia, Africa, and Oceania). A remarkable euphoria is witnessed in young people whose sexual life is not hampered as is that of young people in the West. In like manner the "newly married man" suddenly looks much happier; he is joyous, expansive, satisfied—for a time. Why? Because he is now able to have daily sexual gratification, like the "daily bread" of the Lord's Prayer; and this was difficult before marriage, in the extant social order. But he would be equally satisfied if, in a different social order, you could provide him with opportunities for as frequent and more varied sexual gratification, extra-conjugally.

Mature persons who have prematurely lapsed into a sombre indifference for a monotonous life, so that they neglect bodily care and incline to grow old before their time, undergo a sort of rejuvenation when circumstances unexpectedly make frequent sexual intercourse practicable. We see this especially in country couples, for the partners tend to age prematurely, becoming dull and brutalised. The husband, rendered torpid by the daily sameness of a union that has lasted too long, vegetates, runs to seed, and finds his conjugal relations as monotonous and insipid as his missus wearing curl-papers. Give him a girl to sleep with, and he will respond as the Jews vainly hoped that King David, "old and stricken in years", would respond to Abishag. He will be physically transformed, like a prisoner set free and shipped on a long voyage. He sits up and takes notice, walks triumphantly with an assured tread; his cheeks glow with youth and health; he has his hair cut, cleans his nails, looks like a new man, is pleasing to himself and

others; wants to shine in conversation. His whole organism is braced up, in a way that would never have resulted from wifely tenderness and attention. The dull capon has become a crowing cock. Wives dying of boredom can be marvelously brisked by a dose of the like medicine, as every dress-maker who knows her business is well aware. A change of partners (this is a topic to which we shall return) can work miracles that can never be wrought on those who remain faithful to specialised love. For many, a fresh passion is a resurrection, after which a new life begins. Setting unfamiliar forces to work in the struggle for existence, it can change a career. Those who give loose rein to the sexual impulse never fall a prey to melancholia. To crown the story of this therapeutic influence, we may say that sexual freedom, with consequent renovations and other changes, postpones old age, making both man and woman lively, "not difficult to look at", elegant, distinguished, young in body and in mind.

A man in the fifties, who is old if he has not enjoyed a vigorous sexual life, remains young and active in lands where sexual freedom prevails, and where he will always be able to find young and desirable partners. There is a good deal of truth in the old legend of magicians who could rejuvenate themselves by drinking from the fountain of youth—which means, here, by enjoying the caresses of a young woman. Compare a quinquagenarian who has roamed freely and loved freely, with one who has spent his days in some Little Pedlington, yoked to a "better half" who has herself aged early and become monotonous and unappetising. To point the moral, compare the lion of the desert with the beast that crouches in a cage beneath the tamer's whip.

Suicide grows more and more frequent in modern society, and there can be no doubt that many of these suicides are the outcome of sexual neurosis. On the other hand, one who has abundant and diversified sexual pleasure, unper-

turbed by censorship or repression, one who has unhesitatingly accepted the mechanistic theory of sex, will have no inclination to suicide, and will long to continue an existence so full of charm. A life liberated once for all from the metaphysical obsession of sin, perfectly free in its sexual unfolding, and marked by many amorous experiences, gives the best security for a sound balance both of mind and body.

It will be readily understood that, in such circumstances, sexual freedom can be an indispensable antidote to the many poisons which, in modern society, are tending to multiply nervous and mental disorders, thus leading to a fall in the birth-rate and to the degeneration of the races that plume themselves on being civilised. Very numerous are the neuroses induced by civilisation, and notably by two causes which are to-day receiving much attention from hygienists and doctors, viz. overwork and overcrowding. We must add, as important factors, the legal prohibitions operative in all departments of life to complicate it, make it intolerable, or deprive it of interest. Thereby the individual, being restricted or persecuted in his private life, is brought into conflict with the State or the community. Robert Louis Stevenson showed that the Polynesians were being slowly but surely killed off by enforced changes in their habits and interference with their customs. This bears, I think, upon the evils caused by the prohibition-neuroses in western societies, where changes are in progress no less considerable than those which have been forced on the unlucky South Sea Islanders—the only difference being that we are fools enough to impose these changes on ourselves.

More than ever the human race is being put out of gear, enfeebled, rendered neurotic, by the abnormal and artificial conditions of modern life; is destroying and depopulating itself by exhausting labours; and is perhaps on the way to the extinction which has befallen many other species. In contemporary life it is essential for man to escape from his



surroundings now and again. There can be no better, no happier method than along the path of sexual gratification. Just now, when it is so necessary to find a counterpoise to the demands of a life in which the nerves and the neurones are being exhausted, man should not allow himself to be jockeyed out of the satisfaction of his natural needs which, when normally indulged, can do so much to restore the balance that has been upset by artificial conditions. Yet this is the moment that the prohibitionists, with their fatal inclination for doing the wrong thing, have chosen for increasing our nervous and mental disorder by declaring a fanatical and pitiless war against the most natural, the most essential, and the most consolatory of our senses. Brief reflection upon the gravity of the situation will show that sexual freedom is something more than a useful therapeutic adjuvant; for its revival has become a positive necessity to health, and without it our race will probably die out. The re-establishment of sexual freedom, the condemnation and rejection of the irrational and noxious anti-sexual code, will achieve something more than the mere disavowal of that code, for it will prove a safeguard for humanity, a safeguard whose need none but fanatical prohibitionists can refuse to admit.

It will be noted that this phase of the twentieth century when Europe seems wounded almost to death by unexpected political developments, when doctrinaires avowedly hostile to freedom of thought and to man's right of self-determination have risen to power, and when political hysteria and the frenzy of social reform are changing our elderly continent into a pandemonium of passion and of tragedy—is coincident with the victorious blossoming of the puritan campaign against extra-conjugal love, against courtesans, and against sexual freedom. By brutally suppressing the possibilities for sexual pleasure, by prohibitionist proselytism, by glorifying persecution and by passing laws to enforce chastity on the unmarried, the blinded

governments have led to outbursts of social brutality which are the expression of the unemployed sexual energies, perverted by repression. The "sublimated" activity of men and women would seem to let loose storms, to arouse sterile controversies, and to inaugurate oppressive dictatorships, as if human nature, having been mutilated, had risen in revolt, and was seeking, in these artificial passions, to create a second nature since it was refused the right to be its true self. Nothing could better explain why the races which have succumbed to this devouring puritanism are now weltering madly in the chaos of social controversy and civil strife.

Certainly I am far from wishing to assert that this wind of madness is blowing only among the nations of the West. There have been frequent examples of the same thing in all sections of mankind. But what seem peculiar to the West are the vague mental states bordering upon frenzy, states which our psychiatrists have studied and classified: melancholia, change of character, shiftiness, morbid cruelty, family hatred, etc. At any rate they are far less common among races which live closer to nature, and where there is no attempt to control all the activities by artificial rules. So much less common, indeed, in the Far East, are the nervous sequelae of syphilis, that pathologists have even asked themselves whether there may not be two distinct strains of *spirochaeta pallida*. But the spread of western civilisation refutes this hypothesis, for just as the neuroses of the West appear in the East when the East adopts the follies of the West, so as western "civilisation" spreads in the East do the nervous sequelae of syphilis appear with truly western frequency and virulence. It is more than probable, then, that our western type of civilisation tends to bring about an increasing loss of nervous poise, and thus to enfeeble vitality. But what is even worse is that our follies are so dominant and so victorious that even our scientific observers fail to realise how much they themselves

are befogged, until they have come to stigmatise as "anomaly" and "delirium" whatever does not square with the conventions of an artificial civilisation. Still, truth is on the side of those who make the effort needed to enable them to triumph over conventional, morbid, and destructive repressions. This may console and encourage us who champion sexual freedom and advocate a return to the outlooks of non-artificialised races. To-morrow the doctrines of legitimacy and sexual freedom will probably be synonymous with "life"; and results will have clearly shown how morbid is the persecution of all things sexual, inevitably tending towards the sickness, enervation, and death of our species. We may hope to see life organised in such a way that easily obtained and diversified sexual pleasure will counteract the anxieties and tensions of an increasingly exacting society.

We may summarise the therapeutic effect of sexual pleasure by saying that it is no less necessary than is sufficient and agreeable food to a full, healthy, balanced, and happy life.

*Sexual Freedom as a Means for preventing the Use of Artificial Stimulants.*—Here is another consequence, though an indirect one, of sexual freedom. We know that too often, in societies where there is an effective and puritan repression of free sexual relations, those who are deprived of natural gratification have recourse to the artificial stimulus of alcohol or other habit-forming drugs. One of the causes of the enormously extended use of intoxicants in modern times has been the increasing hindrances which the law has put in the way of healthy sexual gratification, and more particularly the war which the State and society have declared against extra-conjugal sexual intercourse and against courtesans.

Besides promoting hypocrisy both public and private, the futile and unpopular struggle of the State against sexual enjoyment has, by making this more difficult, inevitably

induced diversions and substitutes. Artificial pleasures most injurious to health have been created or fostered. Never have stimulants and intoxicants been more generally used than in our own epoch which proscribes sexual pleasure. Tobacco, opium, narcotics, and alcoholic drinks of all kinds are indulged in to an extent proportional to the difficulty of obtaining sexual pleasure. The ancients, who had no scruples about sexual indulgence, were comparatively little inclined to these poor and dangerous alternatives. Casanova, the typical free lover, put them in a subordinate place. For him good wine was no more than an agreeable companion to Venus; and of gambling he took the usual eighteenth-century view, that it was only a means for plucking geese. We have changed all that. Nature being put under the ban, we choose the derivatives to be found in the arsenal of harmful pleasures. This is to turn the scale of values upside down. So heartily do the anti-sexuals lend themselves to it that they have induced public opinion to show more tolerance for those who become the slaves of stimulants and narcotics which are used without disguise, than for the loyal servitors of nature who are forced into hiding. The large-scale development of sport in modern times, innocent enough in itself, is certainly antagonistic to spiritual culture and refinement of manners, for it tends to bring brutality into the limelight and to thrust mental subtleties into the background. Though scorned by intellectuals, sport is the natural counterpart of the prohibition of sexual pleasure. When work is over, there are vacant hours to be filled. In former days these periods of relaxation were devoted to the pursuit of love, to delicate and fascinating intrigues, to stimulating encounters. Now, when sex is taboo, they are given over to tennis, cricket, football, or to watching others play these games; and the cult of sport is most frenzied and is carried on with the most childish enthusiasm in lands where marriage and procreation are considered the only legitimate excuses for sexual indulgence. But for non-arti-

ficialised beings the most natural sport is sexual pleasure, the sport of love for its own sake.

Artificial stimulants are dangerous. Only a doctor can decide to what extent they are desirable for therapeutic purposes or may properly be added to the daily dietary. But natural stimulants are the splendour of life, and with their help alone can life be realised to the full, since all life is a reaction to stimuli. They develop it and exalt it. We must throw the doors of our being wide to these natural stimulants; and among them the joys of the sexual act, so eminently natural and legitimate, take the first place. Everyone who, having adopted false principles, denies this, lives by choice in the cold and cloudy north when he could, if he would, delight in the sunshine of the south.

We have been enslaved by the cowardly "moralists" who dread natural stimulants and will not allow people to walk without crutches. They despoil life of all that renders it impassioned and attractive, while unpardonably thrusting it into the morass of artificial excitants. One who chooses his doctors badly, gets the doctors he deserves. The U.S.A., the typical country of sexual prohibition, is, according to Mr. McAdoo, chief of the New York police, the one where the traffic in habit-forming drugs is most rife; and President Hoover has told us that it is also the land where common crime is most prevalent. This holds together. The Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which made America "dry", may have been called for because the consumption of alcoholic beverages was immoderate, but alcoholic excess is far less marked where sexual indulgence is not banned. The abuse of alcohol and narcotics is betrayed by brutalisation of the face, and by enfeeblement of the intelligence—a degrading spectacle. One who takes to drink or drugs is lost, and will pay for his weakness with health or life. What a lesson this should be to those who, by condemning the simple and intense delights of sex (obtained by a salutary exercise of our natural faculties), have pushed

man into abysses which otherwise he would have escaped. A glance will disclose the eloquent contrast between the unfortunate drug-addict and the person whose sex-life is happy, well-balanced, healthy, and one which brings complete self-realisation. Sexual pleasure makes the face radiant, develops the body, brightens the eyes, promotes intelligence, enlivens speech.

When we study the ravages caused by drink and drugs, when we note the physical and mental decay to which they lead in persons who were formerly well and strong, we begin to learn how much harm has been done by the prohibition of sexual pleasure, which is the healthy blossoming of nature. The putting of natural pleasure under taboo has led man to seek diversion in noxious substitutes. The would-be moralists who, dominated by false metaphysic or lacking experience, have taken it upon themselves to enforce abstinence from the exercise of the most normal of human functions, and have thus driven man to drink and drugs, must be held accountable for a grievous sin against mankind. Doctors agree in denouncing the abuse of stimulants and narcotics. "As the nervous functions grow increasingly complex and as the end result of any train of nervous actions becomes more and more uncertain, so does the sensibility to toxic agents become intensified." (*Nouveau traité de médecine*, vol. vi, p. 13.) Again: "Another observation which shows the importance of social factors in the development of chronic alcoholism is its predominance among the working class. Alcoholism is a proletarian malady. No doubt in all classes we encounter persons who drink to excess, but such abuse is especially common among the workers. There are various reasons for this. First of all, alcohol is an anaesthetic, and can therefore temporarily dull feelings of fatigue; further it seems (only seems) to compensate for inadequacy of food. Besides allaying the sense of fatigue, alcohol appeals to the palate, and arouses pleasing bodily and mental impressions. This poison gives

rise to euphoria. Naturally, then, those who lack the material and moral satisfactions furnished by wealth, culture, and education will tend to fly to the false consoler. The conditions under which the common folk do so in France show that they are in search of comfort, pleasure, and sociability. In great measure the working man frequents a tavern in order to escape from his narrow and ill-kept home, in order to rest after his daily task, in order to enjoy conversation with his mates. The relative comfort of the pub, and animated discussions with his fellows, represent for him luxury and pleasure." (*Ibid.*, p. 303.) All the foregoing considerations apply no less eloquently to the needs aroused by frustrate sexual satisfaction.

It is likely enough that by getting hold of drug-addicts before they are too hardened in their bad habits, and by switching them towards the easy gratification that will be attainable under a regime of sexual freedom, one might be able to effect a cure. Toxicomania is in many cases nothing but the outcome of a craving for keen and engrossing sensations. Often, too, it is a substitute for the sexual pleasures that are denied. That is why women who are "neglected" by their husbands are so apt to fly to drink or drugs.

*Nudism.*—Since the opening of the nineteenth century, few movements bearing on the sex problem have attracted so much attention from the general public as nudism. This is the name of a movement, advocated by many with the fervour of an apostolate, on behalf of the suppression of clothing and the return to a communal life which is to be spent in a state of nature. I do not propose to write the history or to give a detailed account of the present phases of this cult, which the interested reader may discover for himself in monographs by H. Nadel, in three issues of "Vivre Intégralement", and in Dr. Pierre Vachet's work *La nudité et la physiologie sexuelle*.

In western countries there has been a strong movement on behalf of nudism, especially in the theatre, where "in-

tegral nudity"—or almost integral nudity—has been in the end accepted under pressure of the opinion of audiences too large to be flouted or of a fashion decreeing that parts of the body which in former days were carefully hidden may now be freely exposed. The law courts have been called upon to decide in cases where charges have been brought against bathers for "indecent exposure" at fashionable seaside resorts—places which in general have shown much tolerance and have indignantly refused to enforce puritan restrictions. There would appear to be a great future for nudism, the "Free Parks" of Germany, where the authorities allow integral nudity, being one manifestation among many. We learn from the English papers that not far from Croydon is a wooded plot of four acres used for sun bathing, and that London also boasts a Sun-Bathing Society. At Toulon, in 1930, when some nudists were prosecuted and fined for disporting themselves in a park where they were visible from the street, it was revealed that among them was a retired policeman. If the police have been conquered by the new cult, even though only men who have been pensioned off, it must certainly be making great progress. From the start, it spread with a speed which might surprise us if we did not know that, as Judge Lindsey declares, there is a widespread revolt against the numerous inconsistencies of the still dominant sexual system.

On the other hand if there be an innovation whose alleged novelty is unquestionably open to dispute, it is nudism. To say this is not to criticise nudism, but to glorify it, and to justify it if need for justification there be. The essential article of faith is found in Pierre Vachet's declaration: "We were created to live nude, even as naked we came out of our mother's womb, and as certain primitives still go totally unclad." I have already shown that nudity was proper to certain past civilisations and is still taken as a matter of course by many extant peoples. Nay more, the apologia for nudity is no more modern than nudity



itself. "We come across it in England at the close of the eighteenth century", writes Edmond Jaloux, "when it was voiced by the disciples of Rousseau. William Blake, the great visionary, hoping to rediscover primitive innocence, would appear at the door of his little house accompanied by his wife, the pair of them being as stark as Adam and Eve before the Fall. Somewhat later Mr. Newton, one of Shelley's friends, advocate of a return to nature, put his theories into practice; and Mrs. Newton would often pass the whole morning totally unclad. 'After spending several hours in this way, I feel so innocent for the rest of the day.' Good Dr. Franklin recommended nudity, and the Newtons' children used to wander naked all over the house."

We cannot, however, escape amusement when we note some of the illogical results of nudism in an anti-sexual society. In the year of grace 1929, Dr. André Durville, co-director with his brother of the Société Naturiste, writes: "My brother's boy knows all about sexual matters. He has often watched his father and his mother dressing and undressing, and finds nothing to astonish him in what he sees, for he regards everything as perfectly natural and normal." (Quoted by Roger Salardenne, *Le culte de la nudité*, p. 163.) No doubt, and we shall return to the question when we come to consider sexual education. But what a twentieth-century civilised man here acclaims as an enormous advance, is something which nature herself taught primitives; and something western propagandists installed in Africa, Asia, Polynesia, and the Americas did their utmost to make the poor primitives unlearn, using threats and punishments to enforce the lesson, and often with success. Is it not one of Time's Revenges, one of Life's Little Ironies, that, children of an artificial civilisation who have destroyed the primitive naturalness of others, we should now have laboriously to rediscover naturalness for ourselves, and return to the actions we have proscribed? As I shall point out later when I describe the frantic efforts of anti-sexual doctrinaires to

disturb the tranquil and healthy life of rational societies, we cannot but see herein a terrible indictment of our own false gods.

Let us now examine the fundamental principles of nudism.

Here is a fact of capital importance, and an unexpected one—to judge by the surprise it arouses in the reporters who have tracked the nudists to their lair. These reporters expected to find integral nudity, whether in the persons of its adepts or in their publications, intimately associated with sexuality. They were interested in the nude almost exclusively on account of its supposed connexion with the genital organs or with sexual acts. For, to our sophisticated minds, “nudity” seems practically synonymous with “sexuality”. But the reporters found the nudists to be people who have little or no interest in sex. The good faith of nudists in this respect is no longer open to question. Nudism is concerned with hygiene and therapeutics, and if it shocks conventional moralists it does so perhaps by its very indifference to the exhibitions about which the moralists raise such a hubbub.

But the nudists go much further, and that is what concerns us in this study. They do not make a stand against current sexual morality; and indeed, in all their pronouncements, they appear to support it. In other words, the problems which have vexed us and whose solution we have sought along the lines of the doctrine of legitimacy and the mechanistic theory of sex seem to have escaped their attention, or at any rate that of their chief spokesmen. Here, however, is one formulation by a nudist who really appears to have considered the essence of the matter: “I claim to have learned by experiment that desire is not specially stimulated by our exhibitions of the nude, for, on the contrary, by frankly satisfying sexual curiosity we lessen its dangers.” (L. C. Roger, *Au pays des hommes nus*, p. 175.) Nudists take a great deal of pains to illustrate this thesis, which they regard as a necessary part of their system. “The

practice of nudism on a liberal scale would prevent unwholesome stimulation, and would allay the sexual obsessions and pornographic visions on which fancy feeds." Nudism, then, is to be an auxiliary of anti-sexual morality. We are assured as much in plain terms: "Everyone should know that gymnastics, sport, physical exercise, above all in the open air and with no clothing, are admirable regulators of the sexual impulse, for the disciplining of movement prevents the development of strong emotions. . . . When the rules of morality are becoming difficult to observe, we can find potent aid in sport and open-air gymnastics, which keep the bodily desires in check while fostering a sense of solidarity." (*Ibid.*, *passim*.) Thus nudism demands recognition as "beneficial from the outlook of morality and good manners". Integral nudity "will put an end to vice and lust". It is a system which will "purify mankind".

We shall perhaps wonder whether all these compliments paid to morality by persons who have discarded so many prejudices are more than prudential. It must not be forgotten that the nudists claim to be a persecuted sect. There have been nudist martyrs. The adepts of the faith are in perpetual danger of being attacked by the prohibitionists for "indecent" which to the anti-sexual mind is as disgraceful a crime as theft or murder. That would excuse many reserves and explain a good deal of diplomacy. Beyond question the risk of such accusations is never far from their thoughts. "We must avoid", says Dr. Fougerat de Lastours, "anything that might seem equivocal from the outlook of traditional morality." (Quoted by Roger Salar-denue, *op. cit.*, p. 165.) He adds that the moral blamelessness of the nudists will give them strength in face of the powers of falsehood and error which are allied to strike them down and destroy them. Again: "In France the nudist societies insist on knowing all about the antecedents of a candidate for membership, unless two extant members stand sponsor as to morality." (*Ibid.*, p. 168.) In Germany

a candidate for membership of the Palagianer-Bund makes a formal declaration to the effect that the practice of nudism "seems advantageous from the outlook of good manners and morality". (*Ibid.*, p. 56.) The nudists of Hong-Kong, we are told, ask the candidate for membership to profess "idealism". Now it is obviously easier to say one is an idealist than to give proof; and it is equally clear that such puerilities can have nothing to do with nudism properly so called. In London various precautions are taken to keep the place of meeting secret; and every man must be accompanied by a woman or by children, though the rationale of this stipulation may not be obvious to sceptics immune to sexual phobia. Such nudists, indeed, must be in bondage to the sexual taboo.

We must not forget that phobia of the nude finds copious expression in western newspapers, magazines, and books. Exhibitions of nudity will be "written up", especially now that the movement has made so much progress without having become a commonplace, and now that it has developed a theory. But the commentators still refer to nudism as something extraordinary, as freakish. Since they are under the spell of atavistic conceptions of morality, nudism is stigmatised as strange and utterly abnormal, this being the precise opposite of what it really is. Some of the reporters gravely describe sea-bathing in Germany, telling us that no one on the beach hesitates to wear a short and clinging "costume", which may be reduced to something little larger than a fig-leaf. Can we be surprised at this surprise when we recall that in Spain not so very long ago women hid the greater part of the face, disclosing only the nose and the eyes. Such partial veiling, which was doubtless reminiscent of the yashmak once worn by Arab women in Spain (and elsewhere), was held to be a tribute to "decency", and betrayed a complex intermingling of the anti-sexual conventions of the Jews, the Christians, and the Musulmans.

Hostility to the nude is characterised by the violent and

cruel fanaticism, by the irrationality, with which other anti-sexual manifestations have made us familiar. We find it difficult to realise that anything properly describable as a human mind can have existed in the inhabitants of an Austrian village where, not long ago, some young and pretty girls from Vienna who ventured to walk abroad in bathing costumes were chased, mobbed, and soundly flogged with nettles. So thoroughly did the harpies get to work that some of the victims had to be sent to hospital. Numerous elements must have contributed to this frenzy. A stupid want of understanding, hatred of the flesh and of "sin", dislike of liberty in any form, bondage to tradition, jealousy, envy—all, all were at work. If nudism has to overcome such enemies, they certainly comprise a formidable army.

The nudists, therefore, do well to play a prudent game. But in large measure they are probably sincere in their professions, for the writings of their own theoreticians show them to be comparatively indifferent to ideas of sex, with their passions chilled rather than warmed by the habitual prospect of nudity. There can be little doubt, moreover, that few of these worthies have gone deeply into the sexual problem, or have excogitated a consistent theory which might enable them to denounce the anti-sexual code or to counteract its evil effects.

But the nudists' submissive attitude has not placated prohibitionists, who assail them as fiercely as they assail the Freudians, using the same sort of venomous invectives. Here we have a good example of the danger of half-measures, and of the intolerance of the anti-sexuals. The nudists do not propitiate their enemies when they confine themselves to the advocacy and practice of open-air gymnastics in a state of nature, while refraining from a vigorous line upon the vexed question of sexual reform. Thus their armour is as inadequate as their reasoning, and they lay themselves open to attack.

I feel justified in predicting that only among the adepts

of legitimacy will nudism in the long run find doughty allies, and that the nudists will, in due course, have to hoist our colours. This is not only because the anti-sexuals will never understand or will persist in denying the moral preoccupations of the nudists and their good faith. The purity fanatics have taken the wrong side once for all in the age-long struggle between freedom and thought and the right of self-determination, on the one hand, and the dogmatists who claim a monopoly of truth and the right to rule as dictators, on the other. It is futile for nudists to attempt to disarm such inveterate adversaries by professions of candour, however sincere. When the nudists appeal to natural law and claim the privilege of moving about freely without drapery of any kind, they have risen in revolt against the axioms of the sexual taboo, which is defended, as we know, with a truly religious fervour. They have tampered with the corner-stone of a sacred edifice, and its defenders will make no concessions. Even though the prohibitionists, clinging to Judeo-Christian tradition, have committed a disastrous psychological blunder in believing that they can subdue sexual desire by anathemas, ostracism, and the puerilities of "modesty"; and even though the nudists, holding the inverse theory, declare that their experience leads them to the very opposite results—still there is no reason to suppose that the anti-sexuals will acknowledge their mistake and abandon their cherished determination to prosecute nudists for indecent exposure.

The apostles of sexual legitimacy, ignoring the nudists' own attitude upon the matter of sexual morality, consider that nudism will have important practical consequences. Here are some of these.

Free exposure of the genital organs is a permanent denial of the idea of sin which has been attached to them by the anti-sexual tradition of the West. It has been a public proclamation of the bankruptcy of that idea, just as was the spectacle of the nude American savages to European

sixteenth-century explorers. Thus one of the results considered most desirable by the apostles of sexual legitimacy is achieved at the outset by the nudists. The genital organs are enfranchised and are restored to normal everyday life.

Simultaneously this enfranchisement challenges the hypocrisy of the whole anti-sexual system. It is amusing to note that in a nudist environment the people who feel ridiculously out of place are those who continue to wear clothes. They are embarrassed and ashamed by their dress, which has become manifestly superfluous. A veil has fallen from before their eyes, or it is as if they had been operated upon for cataract, hypocrisy having been put to flight by the first glance at naked truth.

With hypocrisy vanishes a conventional, false, and extremely prejudicial part of children's education, for there no longer remains that "mystery of sex" whose strangeness makes them ill. Plain to all the world, now, are the two sexes and their normal functions. I shall return, by-and-by, to the consequences and the bearing of this demonstration.

The proprietary rights which almost everyone foolishly inclines to arrogate over the body of the partner in the sexual act, an alleged right which underlies the drama of jealousy, has been done away with. A body exposed for all to see, when the "private parts" are displayed as they are displayed by nudists of both sexes in their open-air exercises, can no longer be treated as a preserve which the testy lover watches like a gamekeeper prepared to ward off intruding glances at the pistol's mouth. Many harassing and dangerous ideas have been dispelled, so that the road has been opened leading to a better and more peaceable conception of sexual intimacies and to the most elementary rights of personal liberty.

Here is a further advantage of nudism. A new outlook gradually arises. If a human being prefers to go about unclad, what shocks us is, not that he or she should appear in a state of nature, but that, for doing so, anyone should

be prosecuted, condemned, and sent to prison. We reach a new phase of the perennial struggle between rationalist views of life and the metaphysical paraphernalia of the old religions. This will come up for consideration later, when we discuss the attitude of the State towards sexual matters. But to nudism we are certainly indebted for an immediate advance in social and legal theories, and for a welcome tendency towards increasing toleration. This has freed us, earlier than would otherwise have been possible, from that danger of being prosecuted for "indecent behaviour" which has been one of the curses of an anti-sexual society.

Another promptly realised advantage of nudism will be a glorification of the idea of cleanliness. Here in the West, where the "holy filth" of the saints was so much admired, and where no more than lip-service has ever been paid to the proverb "Cleanliness is next to godliness", for centuries baths have been rare and dirt has been abundant. Few people have been cleanly in the West, not even in southern Europe where there is less excuse for not washing than under the chill skies of the north. The French municipalities which have established cheap public baths are rewarded by the indifference of the ratepayers, and the high charge made for baths in the hotels shows that their use must be infrequent. Here is a typical example of the tainting of the most elementary notions of cleanliness with ideas of immorality. In a girls' boarding-school there had been installed the rare luxury of a modern hydrotherapeutic system, including the apparatus essential to the more intimate stages of a woman's toilet. A mother who was inspecting the school with a view to sending her daughter there was outraged by the sight of these utensils, and exclaimed: "My Bertha is a decent girl, and has no use for things of that sort." Here we have the echo of a traditional uncleanness which is justified on "moral" grounds, but the incident will seem incomprehensible to any women-readers belonging to the non-Aryan races with whom frequent ablutions are a neces-



sary part of daily routine Contempt for the body, as preached by western religions, has too often been made an excuse for neglect of the elements of personal hygiene. Since niggards are apt to reserve cleanliness for those parts of the skin which are open to general inspection, nudism should lead to prompt improvement in this respect.

We may agree, finally, with the nudists that to the foregoing great benefit will be superadded a valuable therapeutic gain. This is what has led so many doctors to support the movement. Interviewed by "l'Intransigeant", Dr. Vachet declared "The sun is the most important known physical healing agent, and there is a Neapolitan proverb which runs 'All illnesses can be cured by sunlight'. But the hale as well as the sick can profit by sunlight, which is an admirable tonic under whose influence strength increases, appetite improves, sleep becomes more regular, and nervousness passes off. Turning to consider the aesthetic effects, we find that the skin is bronzed, the muscular contours fill out but the curves in general are softened, while the whole body acquires grace and harmony which nothing else can produce. Surely these are matters of moment to the race and its future?"

Vachet's declarations are confirmed by a study of the Polynesian races. But indeed the advantages of nudism can in great measure be secured in private life, without joining a nudist camp. Those who do away with clothing perhaps rid themselves at the same time of much of the disastrous repression for which dress acts both as the ally and the symbol. (The topic of *Nudity and Health* is discussed in the fourth issue of "Vivre Intégralement".)

We now come to a consequence of nudism which has a very different bearing, but is one which must not be neglected in our study of sexual ethics. Nudists have observed that integral nudity has much less tendency to arouse sexual desire than has the aspect of a clothed or half-clothed person. In this connexion it is a familiar story that a modern

prostitute rarely shows herself to a customer entirely nude, preferring to keep on a pair of stockings or a diaphanous shimmy. "I don't like the nude", says a pretty woman (Maud Lotz). "It is too chaste." Nudism gives striking examples of this truth. We may often be surprised to learn that a young woman, when totally nude, will leave her partner cold, though he was greatly excited by her before she undressed; and she will "modestly" resume her dress in order to stimulate the advances of the man from whom she has no longer anything to conceal.

This is a teasing psychological problem which deserves close study. If the fascination of the genital organs is as overwhelming as was indicated in an earlier chapter, we should expect their display to arouse excitement rather than to chill desire. A naked fire warms more than does one hidden by a screen, and may positively scorch. Are we to suppose that the organs are less fascinating than the garments which cover them? Surely such a supposition is absurd? But perhaps the fascinating organ requires a reinforcing though extraneous factor (a "catalyser" is what a chemist would say) before it can exert its full charm?

That is probably the explanation. The reader may remember that I attributed the lure of the genital organs to their association with the idea of enjoyment, the supreme enjoyment of the orgasm. Perhaps this association is frustrated if the organs become mere anatomical structures. That seems to be what happens in nudists, for whom the genitalia are on the same plane as any other bodily organ, and the sense of their specific function no longer arises. There is no sexual purpose in their display, and they therefore no longer call up the notion of pleasure. The sexual purpose is a necessary stage on the road to the garden of pleasure, and that conception of the end is needed to stimulate desire. When it is absent, desire is in abeyance. Thus a much desired woman who strips to give facility for sexual gratification, and does so after the desire has been

fully aroused, does not discourage it by the display of nudity. But in the professional courtesan, nudity kills desire because it precedes the necessary stimulus and is incapable, unaided, of arousing the sexual impulse. The purposiveness to which I referred above does not become operative. Purpose ought to create an understanding, a complicity between the partners, who should be united in their desire to realise sexual pleasure. Too glaring an offer, too frank an exposure, will arrest this mechanism by substituting a partial realisation for a purpose. The retention of a garment will subtly recall a time when the partner was fully clothed, that is to say a time when the purpose was in full force and was coincident with the desire for an act which must be performed two by two.

Experience shows that this joint sexual purpose is an indispensable factor of desire in many persons, and a useful adjutant in the majority. That is why a man is often more interested in a woman who is rather plain but obviously passionate, than in one who is frigid though beautiful. In the doctor before whom a woman disrobes for clinical examination, no desire arises, especially if she is free from coquetry and is quite matter-of-fact. Because there is no sexual intention on either side, the sexual impulse does not stir. The male nudist who associates with women that have not disrobed for him, and have no sexual interest in him, is as indifferent as if they were statues. It would be interesting to discover what would become of this frigidity if one of the partners, disregarding it, were to have recourse to the arts of coquetry, and especially to provocative glances, appropriate gestures and caresses. Since it is not by its mere existence that clothing contributes to sexual excitement, but because it indicates a sexual purpose and stresses that purpose by gradual disrobing, we may well believe that even though in this instance the partners are, by hypothesis, nude, purpose could be indicated in other ways.

We may, then, unhesitatingly agree that integral nudity

is not a stimulant of sexual desire nor likely, by itself, to induce desire. But there are good reasons for supposing that it would not prove a hindrance in the case of persons predisposed by temperament or experience to be sexually forthcoming. Sexual pleasure, whose legitimacy we have recognised, is so essential to happiness that for many of us it would seem a grave objection to nudism should the practice of this cult reduce sexual desire to a degree which would be tantamount to the annihilation of the impulse and leave us nothing beyond the mere function of reproduction; should nudism, in a word, become an ally of conventional morality. But we can be easy in our minds about the future of the sexual impulse. Even though providing for the future of the race were to be left to women of the clitorid and men of the phallic type (*Sex Life and Sex Ethics*, pp. 14-19), their name is legion, and they would see to it that mankind should not die out. Besides, the nudists think a great deal about physical beauty, perfection of line and pose, harmony of movement, the suppleness and liveliness which give them "artistic delight". The emotions aroused in them by the sight of the human form are pleasurable from their very nature. Since this pleasure is sensual, it must act upon the senses quite as much as upon the intellect. It is more than probable that the emotions must have a sexual tinge, nudity notwithstanding, to a degree varying from person to person; and this is quite agreeable to the apostles of legitimacy, who approve on principle of all sexual manifestations.

To conclude, we may summarise as follows the relations between nudism and sexual legitimacy. A nudist is not necessarily an adept of the doctrine of legitimacy; but one who has become an apostle of legitimacy will certainly favour nudism because it facilitates and activates the spread of that doctrine. At least we can be sure that those who unflinchingly adopt integral nudity must have been liberated, or nearly so, from the unwholesome doctrine of sin. They are, then, so many recruits for rationalism. Nor can

it be doubted that nudism will gain from the support of the adepts of legitimacy; and it is probable that many nudists, those of them who are consistent in their ideas of sex, will be won over for the doctrine of legitimacy. The others are well on the road. To the reporter who questioned her during her journey to the Land of the Nudists, Dora boldly declared, looking him straight in the face: "No, I am not a virgin. Do you attach any importance to virginity?" Evidently she had passed on from integral nudity to an integral view of sexual legitimacy.

## CHAPTER V

### PRACTICE OF SEXUAL FREEDOM

Misuse of Sexual Freedom.—Latter-Day Revision of our Attitude towards Masturbation.—Social Results of Sexual Freedom.—Legitimacy and Freedom in Relation to Practical Sexual Life.

*Misuse of Sexual Freedom.*—The advocates of sexual freedom are often called upon to answer a general criticism from those who fear that this freedom will be misused. What does that term signify?

If it means no more than that in a society where there are far more abundant facilities for sexual intercourse than among ourselves, each individual will have more extensive control of the frequency and variety of his sexual acts (no one looking at him askance), the criticism is invalid, for to the champions of sexual freedom this is not “misuse”, but perfectly logical and desirable use. Everyone, they hold, should be entitled to manage his own affairs, in this matter as in others. If he wants one kind of sexual pleasure more often, since the same chances are open to all he is entirely within his rights, and no one is entitled to carp. Every action which concerns the individual and not society, or if it concerns society does so superficially and indirectly, is the individual’s private affair. Sexual enjoyment, in particular, will be regarded as a purely private matter in any State where a rationalist system has replaced the incoherences and the ill-conceived statutes upon which the extant regime is based.

If those who talk of misuse of sexual freedom are referring to the physiological harm which can result in those who, overestimating their own capacities, may be tempted into excess, we have already pointed out that this is a matter

of hygiene. It is left to the individual to decide whether he shall eat or drink more than is good for him. We know that the law can effect little here, and that when legislators try to interfere they do more harm than good. Under the present sexual system it is probable that most lads and lasses masturbate to excess, for intervention is rendered impossible by the secret and purely personal character of auto-erotism, while masturbation is undoubtedly promoted by the stupidity of official prohibitions. Anti-sexual prohibitionism has tended to make masturbation run riot, and this is probably one of the causes of the fall in the birth-rate. On the other hand, even marriage, the licensed form of sexual relations, cannot prevent excess within its domain. We are thrust back, then, upon the power of education, and upon the individual's own knowledge of what is good for him. What for one is sexual excess, may be normal and wholesome indulgence for another. "One man's meat is another man's poison." There can be no doubt that the general balance of health will be favoured much more by sexual freedom than by inducing neuroses through prohibitionism.

A prohibitionist education is not likely to prevent a man's killing himself by sexual excess, for such an education cannot cope with passion. What is requisite is physiological and hygienic experience. We must teach people how and how frequently they should indulge, and in what way excess can lead to harm. Nothing but a sound knowledge of the disastrous bodily results of sexual excess can obviate mischief. But, says the objector, mere knowledge that a practice is harmful does not suffice to check it. Doubtless, but moral advice would have succeeded no better; and at least those who warn the inexperienced of the dangers of illness or exhaustion are referring to something tangible. Moral education proves incompetent to restrain the ardours of sex. Libertines, indeed, knowing very well what they are about, are usually able to avoid excess and its dangers, which are far more likely in an auto-erotist.

Anyhow, what is essential is that each one should be left to regulate his sexual life as he thinks fit. For each there is an average amount of safe and wholesome sexual enjoyment, the limits being determined by temperament, health, bodily strength, the force of passion, inherited constitution. It varies enormously from person to person. Do we dream of trying to impose the same diet on all, regardless of individual diversity? Some need more sleep than others, but should we therefore try to make A content himself with what suffices B? What could be more stupid? Yet the attempt is made as regards sex when we narrowly restrict the possibilities of gratifying sexual desire, and persecute those who transgress our strait limits because these restrictions are found intolerable. The first need is to throw down the barriers, leaving everyone free to regulate his own sexual life as he considers expedient, and to establish a sexual order sufficiently elastic to leave scope for the satisfaction of varying sexual needs. We must not tax with immorality the phallic or the clitorid whose needs are more copious than those of the orchitic or uterine.

Besides, what system of sexual hygiene could produce more lamentable results than the present one, for either sex? Unless the partners are "properly married", it makes the sexual act an anomaly, furtively and often hastily performed, too irregularly or at too long intervals to be advantageous. From this outlook, the life of young men and young women is a defiance of nature, and for the most part one of solitary indulgence in auto-erotism. Consequently neurosis is rife, for it is indisputable that the greater part of the widely prevalent functional nervous disorders (the characteristic maladies of modern times) are due to the difficulty of obtaining normal sexual gratification. Bertrand Russell points out that the sexual excitability which is so common among young people in the U.S.A. (indicative, as Judge Ben B. Lindsey well shows, of a revolt against puritan conventions) causes manifest social troubles, more especially



the results of insufficient sleep, the small hours of the morning being devoted to amusement.

Some physiologists believe that the premature ageing often observed in the women, and sometimes in the men, of the indigenes of warm countries must be due to sexual indulgence in early life. But an identical premature senility is seen in the exceptional members of those races who abstain from such indulgence, or rarely indulge. We note early senility, for instance, among the Christianised half-breed women who are brought up in convents and have no facilities for early sexual intercourse. Is it not a fact of everyday observation that Jewesses transplanted to Europe and subjected there to the restrictions of western morality continue to age more quickly than their Aryan sisters? On the other hand a man who indulges freely will tend to remain young and active. Often, in such persons, sexual appetite and pleasure will remain vigorous until death ensues from old age.

False, too, is the not uncommon assertion that the imminent extinction of the Polynesians is due to their sexual licence. The Mongoloids of the Asiatic continent and the islands, the Negroes, and the Arabs are no less ardent sexually than the Polynesians, but their fertility saves them from extinction, and makes them prolific to a degree which alarms the Whites. It is these latter, so docile under the sermons of the advocates of continence, who suffer from a rapid fall in the birth-rate. There are manifold causes for the dying-out of the Polynesians; some of these causes, such as syphilis, tuberculosis, alcoholism, the abandonment of native customs, unwholesome clothing, have been set to work by the Whites. Before the coming of the Whites, the Polynesians were so prolific that population had to be checked by abortion and infanticide. Surely those who have imported so many ills would do well to avoid making matters worse by false witness?

In truth, only one consideration deserves attention when

there is talk of the possibility that the privileges of sexual freedom may be misused. I refer to the need for ensuring that sexual activity shall not interfere with civic duties. The critics may fear, or pretend to fear, lest facilities for sexual enjoyment should encourage people to neglect their work. But it will be easy to show that such anticipations are groundless.

In actual fact, the prohibitionist regime makes people waste invaluable time. By leading to a conflict between libido and the anti-sexual code, it gives rise to neuropathy, which causes a terrible squandering of energy and time. Neurosis is a more formidable "thief of time" than procrastination. Even those normal persons who make headway against neurosis, have, where the prohibitionists rule the roost, to devote a lot of their energy to fighting against nature instead of giving nature free rein. This combat is as disconcerting as would be an unceasing struggle against satisfying the pangs of hunger. A large part of our activities has to be consecrated to making war upon nature, or to the task of finding some underground way of evading the taboo. Specialised or individualised love, again, with the absurdities that are vaunted as refinements, introduces numerous complications. A lover will consider it improper to take his latest innamorata to his flat because there he has been "unfaithful" to her (by anticipation) with other flames. Another will lose precious time lest he should compromise the reputation of his ladylove by overtly violating the code, or will forfeit his independence in order to secure for a few minutes a beloved presence more dear to him than tranquillity or duty. Miss Bondfield and Lady Rhondda, speaking to civil servants, agreed that for one of this body "falling in love" (a euphemism for specialised love) would almost inevitably lead to neglect of work. The only difference of opinion between the two ladies was whether this upset would be greater in a woman than in a man.

The adult of either sex is almost invariably in conflict

with parents on account of this matter of sexual activities, striving continually to evade prohibitions. He (or she) lies, has resort to trickery, engages in secret adventures pursued with the arts of a conspirator, devoting hours of preparation to the hunt for a pleasure regarded as illicit. At school or at college, he gives himself up to reveries in which work and attention go by the board. Add that he suffers; or he rarely gets what he wants, sighs and languishes, and is likely to become inefficient in other domains. Discontented, angered by conventional prohibitions which at heart he repudiates, he neglects his studies, for no one can do a thing well when he is much more interested in something else, lacks satisfaction, is never merry at heart. Thus the taboos, far from "keeping the student to his book", alienate him from it in every possible way. The same may be said of all those who, in societies which claim to be "chaste", have no chance of satisfying their desires and are enraged by privation, or else satisfy them by running great risks, taking meticulous precautions, and wasting much valuable time. Such conflicts in the family or in social life are intensified for those who are continually harassed by hearing "irregular" sexual activity stigmatised as abominable; and by the barriers imposed to prevent such activity—barriers which those of ardent temperament break down, forfeiting their social position, or which they evade only with unceasing effort. Above all, "specialised love", when circumstances, prejudices, and the extant sexual order stimulate it without bringing relief, is the source of much sterile perturbation of spirit.

Sexual freedom is the remedy for all these troubles. When sexual enjoyment is no longer an almost unattainable anomaly, but is everyone's for the asking, far less time will be devoted to procuring it or trying vainly to do so. The time spent will be limited to that of the actual enjoyment and that of the resulting satisfaction. Each energy will be guided into its proper channel. When sexual desire can be

easily and adequately gratified, it will be accompanied and followed by a general sense of fulfilment which will be renewable whenever one pleases in a way that will leave abundant leisure for other things. Thus, without distraction and without loss, people will be able to devote the rest of their energies to different sorts of occupation, having given libido its due.

Finally we should note that freedom in this field will greatly reduce the likelihood of sexual brutality. Except for the rare instances in which brutality during the sexual act is second nature, it usually arises from an exceptional and fugitive excitement which is uncontrollable because there has been too long a period of restraint. It results, in a word, from the sufferings due to repression and the censorship. Then there occurs a paroxysm of sexual desire during whose gratification self-control is lost, so that the culmination may be violent and even homicidal. Most of those who make savage sexual onslaughts, especially upon children, are victims of repression and sexual censorship. They abound in countries where courtesans are proscribed, and where people are often practically forced into homosexuality. Sexual brutality, sadistic manifestations, will disappear in a regime of sexual freedom, all the more because such a regime, as we shall see, implies a sexual education aiming at the maximum of joy for all. One of the most desirable results of this will be a general disappearance of brutality.

How false, then, is the theory, accepted without discussion here in the West, that exuberant sexual desire necessarily indicates, or produces, a tendency to a type of behaviour harmful to others. For one who has unhesitatingly accepted the principles of sexual legitimacy, nothing can seem more preposterous than such a conclusion; for if sexual indulgence is beyond good and evil, by what right do the champions of the doctrine of "sin" make of it the first and the worst of sins? We shall reject such a notion as soon as we have

realised that it is reached by way of a tissue of fallacies, after starting from false premises. Nor shall we be astonished any longer when we find (as we so often do) the most admirable social qualities in one whose sexual needs are urgent and multiform, so that his conduct in this respect is of the kind which anti-sexual fanatics denounce as scandalous. We shall find that, in many cases, these sexual "libertines" have been driven to revolt by the persecution of purity fanatics, which has hardened their hearts, and made of them a danger that they would never have become in a society with a better understanding of human needs. Notably this remark applies to many courtesans.

Such an outlook will lead us to revise a number of our time-honoured but by no means venerable judgments. We read in an ancient author that Antonina, wife of Belisarius, "was sincerely attached to her husband, notwithstanding the disgraceful character of her private life and despite her shameless debauchery". For us, Antonina was merely a woman of ardent disposition, capable no doubt of adultery, but able, when her passions were assuaged, to be of enormous help to her husband. She defended him against his many enemies at Justinian's court, and accompanied him on the campaign against the Vandals in Africa, where she played a notable part. She was typical of her species. The chroniclers and our own experience show us how frequent a type it is. Gobineau and Paul Souday, somewhat surprised but thoroughly convinced, tell us that "immorality" (they mean a breach of sexual taboos) has never brought down a government, or even undermined the strength of a nation. Souday writes: "Was not Le Vert-Galant a fine statesman, and did his indiscretions do any harm to his country? Louis XIV was at the height of his glory when he kept mistresses. But the virtuous Louis XVI went to the guillotine; and Louis Philippe, though a model husband, lost his throne."

Governments are sometimes gravely embarrassed when

obliged, in pursuance of an anti-sexual policy, to persecute those whose social behaviour and private lives are otherwise irreproachable. In Canada, for instance, the Doukhobors (being nudists, *inter alia*), 10,000 of whom came to America in 1898, have been prosecuted, jailed, or interned upon desolate islands. Yet the authorities do not deny that they are admirable citizens with strong family affection, and in most respects all that an Anglo-Saxon puritan admires—for they do not drink, do not smoke, and do not swear. In fact these Russian refugees have been a great puzzle to the Canadians, a puzzle that could only be solved in the light of the rationalist principles of legitimacy and sexual freedom.

Besides, everyone finds it difficult to draw a sharp line between liberty and licence, or to give precise and mutually exclusive definitions, for they shade into one another. In truth they are arbitrary terms, both of them tinged with affect. The same act, contemplated by two different persons, will be called by one licentious, by the other a manifestation of a free spirit. The best way of avoiding such perplexities is to abstain from passing judgment upon what people do, so long as they do not injure others. The case is not one between liberty and licence, which are question-begging words. Everyone should learn his own powers and his own limitations. One who does not transgress the bounds appropriate to his constitution—bounds that vary from person to person—and one who does not infringe the equal rights of others, can never be “licentious”, for he will merely exercise his legitimate right to live.

When we realise how great a part sexual pleasure and the search for it play in existence, we cannot fail to see that social groups wherein such pleasure is condemned, spied upon, and hindered, become prison-houses. The harder modern life grows, and the more extensive its claims upon our strength and our time, the less right has anyone to restrict private joys. For some the only joys worthy of the

name are those of sex. Why deny them these joys because they will not accept as satisfactory substitutes the mediocre pleasures offered with much pomp and circumstance by sexual prohibitionists? There are persons who need natural sensations, and will never be satisfied by dull artifices. What right has anyone to sentence them to privation? They never get through the day without suffering unless they are sure of being able, when evening comes, to enjoy the recompense of sexual freedom, with no one to prescribe its kind or quantity. The restraints of the prohibitionists drive them crazy. They cannot endure having naught to look forward to when work is over, except a desert in which they yawn themselves to bed and await the recommencement of the daily round of drudgery.

In modern society how boring is life, how joyless are the evenings, for manual workers, shop assistants, clerks, and other members of the lower middle class, whom our faulty social conditions deprive of the one pleasure which could fully satisfy them—that of a healthily contented sexual desire. They pass the time engaged in futile discussions about political matters which they do not understand, take refuge in the stimulation and brutalisation induced by alcohol or drug-taking, or devote themselves to sports which humbug them into repose by childish “amusements” and muscular fatigue, or they even join organisations for the maintenance of obsolete metaphysical and religious prepossessions whereby their faculty for the understanding of life is yet further impaired. Nothing but sexual freedom can restore to them the joy in life which characterised the happy peoples of pagan days; but for that, having regained freedom, they must be careful to see that no new social ambushes shall be laid for the sexual life, which must no longer be a continual struggle against society, the police, the family, and the neighbours, must not be despised and depreciated—must never again become a prison-house of prohibitionist chastity in which the Babbitts keep strict watch on one another.

Victor Hugo wrote: "To improve material life means to improve moral life." This formula must be given its full significance. To be moral is, to be good, honest, industrious, kind and helpful; but it is not, to deprive oneself of the legitimate pleasures of the senses and the flesh. No one can be moral in the former sense, if he has sexual privation forced on him, if his life, though easy as far as material conditions are concerned, is kept under rigorous restrictions and unceasing supervision in respect of the gratification of the sexual impulse. Certainly we must improve material conditions; but among these improvements, sexual freedom is indispensable. Then people will be contented, glad to be alive, ready to think that all is well, and that society is admirably organised. Those who are happy are naturally inclined to be serene, gay, and good. They are grateful to life, and to the social group which treats them so well. Under these conditions, the citizens will be hard-working people, and will be good. The hours devoted to labour will pass quickly and agreeably for those who know that their leisure time can be freely spent upon pleasures at which none will cavil. Faces will shine with satisfaction, and one will not be perpetually chilled by the frowning and hostile visages which are a mark of a prohibitionist society that places a ban upon enjoyment. No one can be happy when surrounded by spies and informers, or when in unceasing conflict with himself, with others, and with nature. We suffer, are weary, grow bitter, become ill-tempered. Then all is lost. Morality goes by the board, each is as spiteful as his neighbours, as unkind, as disloyal. Those who hate, cannot be loyal; those who cheat, cannot fail to be dishonest. Boredom, immorality, neurosis, social enmity, ruined lives—there you have the balance-sheet of a society which must pay the price of its stupidity in renouncing legitimacy and sexual freedom. Such is the inevitable fate of those who turn their backs upon progress, and will not re-establish the reign of liberty.



To sum up, sexual freedom will not turn loose upon society maniacs seeking the brutal gratification of brutal desires. It is enforced sexual continence that leads to the sporadic appearance of such fiends as "Jack the Ripper", stimulates sexual crimes like those of "Nero the Gorilla", or compels the revised Italian code to decree special penalties for the violation and murder of children which have become such common crimes in Rome. Sexual freedom, on the other hand, multiplying opportunities for gratification and making them easy of attainment, will once for all put an end to acts of violence which now arise from neurosis and unnatural privation. Surely when the social balance-sheet is as disastrous as that of extant sexual morality, it is absurd to feel uneasy concerning the probable effects of a regime of freedom.

*Latter-Day Revision of our Attitude towards Masturbation.*—A revision of our attitude towards masturbation will certainly please many, whether they admit the fact or not. Statistics show, indeed, that the relief will be almost universal. The most recent writers on this subject have taken a new line. When we recall the considerations adduced in *Sex Life and Sex Ethics* (pp. 255 and foll.) regarding the frequency of masturbation, and indeed the whole chapter entitled "The Mechanistic Theory of Sexuality in its Relation to Morals", we may be surprised that the revision has been so long in coming.

The champions of taboo regard the sexual impulse as a danger, and its physiological manifestations as a disease. The results of this outlook would be ridiculous if they were not tragical. In his book *Onanisme*, Dr. Garnier reports the case of a lad of seventeen tormented by uncontrollable desires. Aesculapius, consulted by a young fellow with so good an appetite, does not say simply "Since you are hungry, eat", but treats him as an invalid. "If I were your father, I should make you chop wood for an hour or two every day." Garnier approves, and comments thus: "Wood-

chopping, sawing, gymnastics, would doubtless act like other forms of muscular exercise, of which the chase is one of the best. Diana is the enemy of Venus." Then comes the account of a system of therapeutics to be applied if the sexual impulse remains troublesome (in spite of the wood-chopping and Diana). "A glass of skim-milk or diluted syrup of sweet almonds in the morning will be useful; so are sitz-baths, which should be lukewarm rather than hot or cold; or the genitals may be sponged with water containing a dash of vinegar; camphorated oil rendered more sedative by the addition of a little opium can be applied by inunction, or used as an embrocation to the pubes, the perineum, and the base of the spine. Internally give camphor, extract of hops, tincture of water-lilies; lettuce or lactucarium; the bromides of sodium, potassium, and ammonium." (*L'onanisme seul ou à deux*, p. 185.)—We were almost expecting the author to advise a surgical operation in these obstinate cases. For girls, in actual fact, authors of this school recommend amputation of the clitoris, or infibulation—the barbarous operation in which the inner surfaces of the labia majora are freshened with the knife and stitched together. The foregoing sapient prescriptions, gravely enunciated, are the ripe fruit of a total lack of understanding of sex life and of a repudiation of the doctrine of legitimacy. Such ignorance on the part of those who have studied physiology and completed the medical curriculum should convince us how much work still remains to be done if we are ever to rid ourselves of the fetters forged by anti-sexual tradition.

The fears voiced by the enemies of sexual freedom, fears for which (as we have seen) there is no warrant, show how urgent is the need for a revision of the general attitude towards masturbation. One of the panic terrors of the anti-sexuals is that there would be a great increase in masturbation, should the doctrine of legitimacy gain general acceptance, and children no longer be told that auto-

erotism is "sinful". How profoundly false is the psychology of those who argue thus.

First of all, as we learned in *Sex Life and Sex Ethics*, masturbation is extraordinarily common, especially in the young—so common that it could hardly become commoner. Whether among those brought up in a regime of sexual freedom or among those subjected to the customary taboos, the idea of the "immorality" of masturbation has little or no effect as preventive. The occurrence or non-occurrence of masturbation depends on the intensity of the sexual impulse. If some persons masturbate rarely, and others very often, it is a matter of type; orchitic or phallic, uterine or clitorid, as the case may be. Prohibition of the practice, its persecution, its condemnation as immoral, can only give it an added zest, for "stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant". The inauguration of freedom would do away with this stimulus. Besides, the acceptance of the principle of legitimacy would (as we shall learn in a later volume) facilitate education to show the good and the bad sides of the practice, making the alternatives so clear that the young person's imagination could not fail to be impressed by this utilitarian teaching. One who is left free to do as he likes, with the risk of injury to health as the only restraint, will be the more prone to restrain. Those incapable of self-restraint are of similar disposition to inveterate gamblers or drunkards, and prohibition is no more likely to be successful than freedom. Gluttons and toppers we shall have always with us, as exceptions; and it does not seem fair or wise that the rest of us should have our liberties curtailed for the sake of these exceptions—whom nothing can help. Why should the world at large be dragooned for the reason that there are a few unfortunates who exceed because they are irrational or lack powers of self-control? They are impervious to demonstrations, and the impotence of the western anti-sexual system is made plain by the failure of even such potent instruments as

the confessional and the fear of hell to achieve the desired end.

The champions of freedom and legitimacy take a very different line. Regarding masturbation as a purely physiological discharge of energy, and as therefore amoral and permissible, they do not trouble to denounce it or proscribe it. They do not take the field against masturbation *per se*, but only against its abuse; and a fight against abuse is much easier than a fight against legitimate use, for a reasonable margin is left with which reasonable persons are content, and opposition is not aroused by emptying the child out with the bath-water. It is absurd to declare that masturbation is necessarily harmful. Throughout life many practise masturbation in preference to coitus, without any ill effects whatever. Youthful tendencies to excess are almost invariably outgrown, leaving no trace. The truth is that the fierce campaign against masturbation was unblushingly inaugurated by chartered defenders of the doctrine of sin. They had recourse to a sort of physiological blackmail, threatening youthful masturbators with insanity or premature death, and they showed such amazing ingenuity in the invention of preposterous terrors that the dispassionate observer is compelled to doubt their good faith. The current irrational view of masturbation is part of the evil legacy bequeathed by the Jews to the West. (Witness, for instance, the tale of Onan.) Classical antiquity made no such mistake, and the Polynesians were immune until we invaded those Islands of the Blessed.

Criticism of masturbation falls to the ground when indulgence is moderate, by which I mean, not disproportionate to the needs and capacities of the individual. Even Dr. Garnier admits that "many celibates who have been lifelong masturbators remain healthy both in mind and body far on into old age". More recently Dr. Gilbert Robin has shown that masturbation in infants is neither abnormal nor injurious; and he agrees with Hitschmann that the entire

absence of auto-erotism in early life is a sign of imperfect development. (*L'évolution psychiatrique*, 2nd series, no. 1, 1929.) This confirms the views of the mechanists. Notably Robin refers to the ridiculous way in which earlier writers such as Garnier have stressed the dangers of masturbation. Pallor, loss of appetite, and aprosexia [anglice "scatter-brainedness"] are, he says, of trifling importance.

We are often told that masturbation causes a far more abundant expenditure of nervous energy than does a complete act of sexual intercourse; and that, just because it is so easy, marked excess is likely. Be it noted, however, that these charges are usually voiced by prohibitionists. Though we may be willing to admit that there is some foundation for them, they are suspect because of their source, and we are inclined to fancy that even if they were groundless religious fanatics would have invented them.

Physicians and psycho-analysts report numerous cases of persons who began to masturbate early and continued it indefinitely (though, as they grew older, sometimes taking to mutual masturbation, and occasionally replacing masturbation by coitus), without shortening life or inducing any obvious signs of illness. So common is masturbation that the Protestant author T. de Félice, who admits the need for birth control, wrote in 1930: "We deny, on the other hand, that married couples cannot live harmoniously together without complete sexual intercourse. They have at their disposal all kinds of kisses and intimate caresses to express reciprocal affection. These are partial substitutes for coitus, and the sacrifice such persons make in abstaining from the latter is a tangible proof of their love, which is thereby reinforced." (*Le protestantisme et la question sexuelle*, p. 60.)

Every sociologist willing to face realities must agree that this is so. It is true of great and small alike. A previously unpublished letter from Bonaparte to Josephine appeared in 1932. It is dated 3 thermidor An IV, on the eve of the

Battle of Castiglione. As everyone knows, the general's first wife, a Creole, was of lascivious disposition, and he was exceedingly fond of her. The passionate epistle concludes with the words: "A thousand loving kisses; everywhere, everywhere, everywhere." Those who have the key to such erotic messages will have no doubt as to the meaning of this allusion to hours of sweet intimacy, and it will enable them to correct the unduly reverential attitude of many of those who have written about the Man of Destiny.

"Masturbation at puberty or during the pre-pubertal years is an everyday phenomenon which, unless excessive, has no effect on nervous or bodily health." (Dr. P. Divry, *Physiologie sexuelle normale et pathologique*, 1931, p. 158.) Having referred to the mental condition of persons who are haunted by the idea that masturbation has probably done some irretrievable damage, this author goes on: "The reading of pseudo-scientific books stocked by most booksellers will do much to fortify this conviction." We must also bear in mind the pernicious consequences of anti-sexual and religious dogmas—quoted with gusto in booklets of the aforesaid type—as calculated to render it impossible for a neurotic to retain or to acquire a healthy and scientific view of the sexual impulse, and to make his sex life artificial, uncanny, dominated by fear or remorse. The most unfortunate result of masturbation is that it is apt to cause disquiet and torment in the individual addicted to it—these not being directly due to the practice, but the indirect outcome of the condemnatory verbiage of the anti-sexuals, which arouses neurosis in those incapable of healthy scepticism.

As to the guilt complex, to anyone who holds fast to the rationalist theory that sexual acts are legitimate, this is no more than an obvious corollary of anti-sexual doctrines and the theory of "sin". Nowadays, indeed, only religious catechumens can avoid laughing when they hear masturbation described as unclean, with that virulence of epithet which masks a lack of sound argument. For a rationalist

or a physiologist, masturbation is one of many mechanical forms of sexual indulgence, and all of these are legitimate, and beyond good and evil.

The memoirs of plain-spoken men and women of letters, from Rousseau's *Confessions* onward, show how normal is masturbation; and how harmless, if there be no excess. Here is J. J. Bouchard's frank utterance concerning masturbation in youth: "Such was his life during the later school years, that is to say between the ages of thirteen and eighteen. He masturbated daily, twice as a rule, but often three or four times, and never missed a day except during the four chief religious festivals, when he would abstain for a week or more, but not for a whole fortnight, though he found religious observance extremely engrossing." Again, "from the age of eleven till he was twenty-four, his chief occupation was to use his tool in this way". Though he thus masturbated to what most people would regard as gross excess, his health did not suffer. He records partial impotence when, at twenty-four, he made his first attempts at coitus, but this seems to have been transitory, and mainly due to an acquired preference for masturbation (which did not last), for he was not impotent when he tried various kinds of mutual masturbation with feminine partners.

Let us now hear what Mrs. Alma St. Louis Dent has to say: "If a child masturbates, he is usually drastically punished and called dirty, added to which are threats of possible madness, disease, and death. There is no foundation in fact for these threats, and it is again due to superstition and ignorance that parents and teachers are frightened into this punitive and threatening attitude when this activity occurs among their charges. It should be realised that normal and healthy children do not masturbate to excess. If their lives are occupied with good physical activities their sex glands are not likely to be over-stimulated, and what masturbating they do will amount to little and cannot harm them. Even if a child seems to be slightly over-sexed in

comparison with other children, there is no cause for anxiety. In all probability, provided he is what is termed normal, this activity is necessary to him and he will in no way suffer.

"There appears to be no satisfactory evidence that masturbation has ever harmed a normal person. It is the adult mental attitude towards it which is the source of harm, not the thing itself. In any case it should never be regarded as a punishable offence. If any sort of check is imposed, it should be entirely brought about by calm reasoning and full discussion between child and adult." (From paper on *Sex without Tears* in *Proceedings of London Sexual Reform Congress*, 1929, p. 364.)

This opinion is general among modern physicians and physiologists. Thus Bauer writes in *Wie bist du Weib?*: "I see nothing pathological in the masturbation of childhood, nothing paradoxical in the premature awakening of a natural impulse. Masturbation in children is the fulfilment of a perfectly natural impulse. . . . There are not five children in a hundred who have never masturbated nor wanted to do so." How stupid it is, then, of parents whose notions of the sexual life have been completely distorted by religious instruction to fly to the doctor for a "cure" when they find their children masturbating. Exner writes: "It is now well known that almost all boys masturbate more or less, at one time or another." (*Sex Character*, p. 67.) I should unhesitatingly add, "and almost all girls". Nor do I think there will be any change so long as mankind remains mankind. The nineteenth century loved to rail at masturbators as abnormal, vicious, morbid, and the like; but we have moved forward a few steps.

The mechanistic theory will help to restore order and sanity. We have learned that it is a mistake to regard masturbation as abnormal, or as necessarily harmful. All we are entitled to say is that masturbation is a means for providing sexual pleasure which cannot lead to repro-



duction. Even after marriage, many persons ring the changes between masturbation and coitus without suffering in any way.

The masturbator, therefore, is not abnormal, nor likely to injure his health by masturbation. Here is a plain physiological explanation of the matter. From early childhood, as soon as the sexual impulse awakens (which may be very early indeed), masturbation is a response, often spontaneous and in any case natural, to the need for sexual pleasure. It is in most cases an earlier method of sexual indulgence than coitus, and for many years it may be the only method when—for social reasons, which are usually unwarrantable—coitus is out of the question. Masturbation does no harm to the children that practise it, and since the great majority do masturbate we may say that the moderate masturbator is normal and the child that never masturbates abnormal. Indeed, we have reason to be anxious when a child never masturbates, just as we are anxious when a child has no appetite for food. There are cases in which masturbation is practised to great excess, but they are as rare as cases of excessive and habitual gluttony. The authors of scare manuals upon “the secret vice of self-abuse” love to write up such cases of dangerous excess as if they were the rule. Instances in which one who masturbated in childhood subsequently rejects coitus when the chance comes, are rare. What usually happens is that those who have masturbated in early days, come in due time to vary masturbation with coitus, enjoying both, and not wholly renouncing masturbation, which they are likely to cultivate as a side issue if they know anything of the art of love. This will go on to the end of their days without the slightest injury to bodily health or mental poise.

If, of late, there has been a welcome revision of the medical attitude towards masturbation, it is because the practice is no longer condemned on moral grounds now that people have learned to face physiological realities

without blinking. Tissot's classical portrait of the masturbator, still reproduced from time to time in the aforesaid scare manuals, only applies to those who masturbate to excess. This lumping of the average with the exceptional is characteristic of the animus of anti-sexual moralists, whose own virtue is certainly not moderation.

Excess is, by hypothesis, harmful in masturbation as everywhere else; but where does excess begin? That depends upon the individual constitution, which varies greatly. Bauer writes: "I speak of excess when a girl masturbates, as a good many do, thrice, five times, or even ten times a day." Among boys such frequency is apt to be prevented by the physiological hindrances to reiterated erection of the penis; but we can probably speak of excess when, during the years of growth, a boy masturbates more than once a day. From information garnered in schools it would seem that diurnal masturbation is common from puberty onward, but that there are transient phases of excitability (these may be periodic) when the act can be repeated without harm two or three times a day. Even so no mischief will result, except in persons of weakly constitution. Men who masturbated thus frequently in youth will live to a ripe old age, with potency both for coitus and for reproduction unimpaired. A modern physiologist should distinguish between the use and the abuse of a practice; and Bloch proposed to speak of the former as "Onanie", of the latter as "Onanismus". If for centuries the western world has had a phobia as regards masturbation, this has been the outcome of religious fallacies. Bauer is right in saying: "Many scientists make the mistake of declaring that masturbation is a sign of decadence, and is peculiar to advanced civilisations." In truth what is peculiar to advanced civilisations is a wide experience of sexual relations, and the consequent discovery of more subtilised methods of indulgence. Masturbation was common enough in less developed societies, but such devices as the "olibos" of the Hellenes and the

“consolateurs” of which Mirabeau speaks as being used by the Frenchmen of his day were unknown to primitives. We owe to Havelock Ellis detailed descriptions of these refinements.

*Social Results of Sexual Freedom.*—With regard to every problem, every question, every controversy, there always have been, and probably always will be, some who try to decide by the light of reason, and others whose judgment is obscured by affect. In the latter, reason is clouded by emotion; and they protest, fire up, become abusive, or even burst into tears, when they are simply asked to understand. Such a dispute may last for hours, may end seemingly in the rout of emotion, which departs humble and apologetic—to start next day over again.

This amounts to saying that in practice there are apt to be two ways of facing a problem or dealing with a social difficulty: a grown-up way and a childish one. Let me give an example. The modern legislator finds it necessary to provide for periods of rest from labour. Reason and experience have plainly demonstrated their value, and there is no need to ask for supernatural sanctions as did certain primitive lawgivers who, however wisely inspired, were not free from the prejudices of their time. Modern law, therefore, remains supple, recognises that circumstances alter cases and make exceptions desirable, is not bound by any fetish to order rest on some specific day of the week. That is an intelligent way of looking at the question, of advancing in such a manner as to promote human happiness. Let me now give instances of another method of dealing with it, taken at random from one of the Anglo-Saxon countries where sabbatarianism is rampant. The very word discloses the remotely religious, and therefore unreasonable, origin of the practice. Here the sound social advantages of a weekly day of rest disappear behind a strict application of the letter of the law, which makes enforcement a divine ordinance wherewith practical considerations have nothing to do. The

law commands, not a weekly day of rest (a social prescription), but the observance of the Sabbath (a religious prescription). Forgetting the respect law should have for freedom of conscience, it penalises those who disregard the injunctions of a particular religion even though the religion be repudiated. Of course this leads fanatics to grotesque lengths. At Trenton, New Jersey, U.S.A., the pastor of the Central Baptist Church was prosecuted for Sabbath-breaking. The specific offence was that the minister, running short of petrol, had had a fill-up at a roadside station. The name of a colleague also appeared on the charge-sheet, the crime in his case being the purchase of a cigar on Sunday. The clerk of the court was charged because, on the same day, he had broken the Sabbath by dining at a hotel.

It need hardly be said that in the domain of sexual freedom we encounter the same conflict between reasonableness and childishness. The arguments against it are mostly unreasonable, but some of them demand serious consideration. Enough has been said, for the moment, of those of the former kind, which are the last kick of moribund taboos. But we have to respect the misgivings of those who are inspired by serious aspirations for human progress. I will summarise, and do my best to allay, these misgivings.

The regime of sexual freedom will replace one which, to say the least, is certainly not free. Still, we may be asked, has not the system of constraint been in many respects advantageous? The white races, living under strict regulation, have thereby economised much nervous energy, invented machinery, and thus in material matters got ahead of other races which were indubitably their equals in philosophy and the fine arts. This certainly demands consideration.

First of all let us ask ourselves whether there is any causal relation between sexual restrictions and the indisputable pre-eminence, in some respects, of the white races. Agreed that this pre-eminence is largely the outcome of greater

nervous energy. But a lack of nervous energy is dependent rather on climate than on sexual indulgence. Anyone who has spent a long time in the tropics will agree that great heat, whether moist or dry, is extremely enervating, so that prolonged activity becomes difficult. Many persons in the tropics are, either from temperament or circumstance, extremely moderate as concerns sexual indulgence, but they suffer no less than the others from a languor which is unfavourable to exertion. Attention is speedily exhausted. At a meeting it begins to wander after an hour or two, not from slothfulness or malice, but simply from lack of nervous energy, whereas in a cold climate it would have remained active much longer. With the best will in the world, the working powers soon flag, and one who sticks to his task will find that the results are poor and that the work will have to be done over again on the morrow. Europeans stationed in the tropics for a long spell soon become aware of this, and find that nervous enfeeblement makes them incapable of persistent effort. It has been made the theme of various novels, such as Jean Ajalbert's *Raffin Su-Su* (1929). In my *Essai de psychologie matérialiste* I discussed a revelatory phenomenon, the weakness of memory which so often manifests itself, and resembles the incurable loss of memory seen in old age. It has been especially noted by the British in Farther India, who there speak of it as "Burma head". A sufferer will leave the house on some errand, but has hardly passed the threshold when the purpose is forgotten. Memories of distant events, those of childhood for instance, are unimpaired, but as to what happened yesterday or an hour ago, memory is a blank. The reason is obvious. Owing to the lack of nervous energy the recent impression has failed to produce what photographers call "fixation", the permanent trace in the brain whereby we are enabled to recall long-past happenings. But those who suffer from "Burma head" recover nervous energy during home leave, and then the memory works as well as ever.

Nervous energy would seem, then, to be a function of climate much more than of sexual activity. Men belonging to a white race but living in the hotter parts of Europe—Sicilians, for instance, or Spaniards of Andalusia—have far less mental and bodily output than persons of kindred stocks further north. Conversely Japan, which has a temperate oceanic climate, produces intellectuals of the first rank, and especially inventors who can vie with any of those in western Europe or the U.S.; and it seems likely that China will do the same when the social convulsions in that country have been overcome. But the yellow races take a much more liberal view of sexual matters than is usual in the West; their activities in this field are not restricted by conventions of Judeo-Christian origin. It does not appear, however, that their energies are in the least impaired by the unashamed existence of such places as the Yoshiwara in Tokyo or the Flower Boats of Canton. Here in Europe people are apt to forget that the Greeks and Romans, whose writings and example have had so lasting an influence upon modern Aryan civilisation, did not practise or want to practise the “virtue” of continence. Even their philosophers enjoyed the society of courtesans.

The real triumphs of the modern western world have been in the mechanical domain. Glorious beyond compare are the great inventions with which we have transformed the face of the globe. The machine, in its multifarious forms, has given us help in many respects, has intensified both power and speed, by the elucidation and disciplining of natural forces. The West, almost unaided by the rest of the world, invented and popularised the steam-engine, mechanical transport, the electrical generation and transmission of light and power. These are great things to boast of—but we have little more to our credit.

For when we ask ourselves what we have done in other fields, what have been our notable achievements in the intellectual, moral, political world, we are tongue-tied. It

would be easy to show, and I shall show when the time comes, that two thousand years of endeavour in metaphysical, religious, or political domains, two thousand years of administrative and economic organisation, have culminated in the present crisis, in a state of affairs that seems likely to result in our losing what matters most—freedom of thought and the possibility of living as we please. To say the least of it, other races and other nations have equalled us if not excelled. If we confine our survey to literature and the arts, can it be said that the position of the West is anyway outstanding? Poor indeed should we be if we could not enrich our architecture, our sculpture, and our literature by the study of what has been done in the East, which comes to us as a revelation; if we could not feast our eyes upon the wonders of Thebes and Angkor; if we knew nothing of the Oriental statuary which discloses other dreams and other desires than ours; if we had never experienced the flashes of thought which may come to those who have pondered the poetic imaginings or learned to appreciate the educational treasures of Araby, Hindustan, China, and Japan.

The West is proud of its record, has reason to be, and yet is inclined to over-rate its contributions to world civilisation, prone to exaggerate the credit side of the account and to ignore the debits. We have much to learn from other races. Should not we learn from them the secret of happiness, which is so apt to elude us, especially in our latest social edifices (like those of the United States)? If we did that, as we might, our gain would be enormous. The sexual freedom they enjoy, we too might enjoy, and it would be a splendid addition to the viaticum of terrestrial travellers whose main business should assuredly be to quaff a brimmer of happiness. Sexual freedom has not hindered the greatness of the races that possessed it, and it has hindered the happiness of us who have lacked it. Why, then, should we not call it to our aid to bring into being a society which would

not make martyrdom its ideal and auto-mutilation a theme for commendation? In such a society we should live longer, perhaps, less strenuously, less peevishly; we should have fewer needless responsibilities, be less subject to mutual supervision, be less spied upon by those who (from fanaticism or self-interest) take it upon themselves to watch over our "virtue". Are we for ever to confound life with renunciation of the best things in life, as did the primitives who invented systems of taboo? Is it necessary, till the end of time, to do our social tasks without the stimulus and the reward of the legitimate joys which are, in truth, the mainspring of human nature?

*Legitimacy and Freedom in Relation to Practical Sexual Life.*—We have now finished our study of the principles which, derived from reason instead of from blind emotion or traditional axioms, must be the foundation of any ethical system worthy of the name.

We draw the conclusion that sexual freedom is the corollary of legitimacy.

But we must understand the meaning of the terms we use. In respect of every freedom, we have to distinguish between principle and practice. Even when the principle is accepted, when the legitimacy of a particular kind of freedom is granted as beyond dispute, it does not follow that the practice of the freedom will be absolute. At any rate, there will be limitations imposed by regard for the like liberty of others, for if all were to pursue their own aims without this qualification, we might as well live in Alsatia. This applies equally to sexual freedom. When we advocate sexual freedom, we obviously do so with reserves.

Primarily the sexual freedom which is a corollary of the principle of legitimacy is claimed as a self-evident right. Extant societies, in so far as they ignore or deny the legitimacy of sexual acts, reject or restrict the principle that every human being is entitled to the free exercise of his own sexual energy. On this matter there can be no compromise between



the advocates and the opponents of legitimacy; and the former proclaim freedom to be a corollary of legitimacy. But, secondarily, the freedom which is thus accorded that every one may fulfil his sexual impulses must be practised in such a way as to do no harm to anyone. Hence, throughout these studies, I insist that no one is entitled to claim sexual freedom, or any other freedom, in a way that involves doing violence to others. We have, therefore, to examine the practical question, how sexual freedom can, in actual fact, be accorded under the conditions of man's social life. This problem now remains to be considered.

We must hold fast to the fact that the practice of sexual freedom is essentially dominated by the principle of free and legitimate sexual self-determination. This principle is of outstanding importance, for it means that we shall approach sexual indulgence with a bias in its favour, and not (as is customary in western lands) with the scales loaded against it; that we shall accord the maximum of liberty, instead of the minimum; that we shall regard sexual indulgence as a respectable and respected factor of social life, instead of surrounding it by numberless prohibitions; that we shall restore it to an honourable place among social activities. Whatever may be the aspects of sexuality which have to be studied in the course of our investigations, we must bear these essential considerations in mind, for henceforward they will have to be the sovereign guides of any rational sexual policy.

If life is to be worth living, its great misfortunes must not be unduly great, nor must its great happinesses. I mean that man must learn to temper the extremes; to manifest a tinge of fatalist or stoical equanimity which will prevent his being immoderately exalted or immoderately cast down whatever befall, lest he should forfeit the balance and serenity of one who knows how to escape excessive perturbations. These principles apply to the sexual domain no less than to others; and in accordance with them we are entitled to condemn

the meddling, the noisy declamations, and the theatrical gestures of the prohibitionists.

Free sexual indulgence may, of course, conflict with this or that moral or metaphysical or religious outlook on life. Sexual freedom, for instance, is condemned by the articles of the Judeo-Christian faith, but what does that matter to those who do not seek their guiding principles from this source? More and more, as time marches on, the religions, whatever may have been their past authority, are faced by facts, ideological trends, and changing customs which the adepts of every creed and religious cult find extremely distasteful. Such has been the outcome of free thought, and religious persons, foreseeing what would happen, naturally tried to keep thought in leading-strings. But this is one of the gains that will never be lost, and the victory of freedom of conscience has been definitive. Those who argue against sexual freedom will in future have to show, not that it conflicts with their cherished doctrines, but that it is socially harmful. I think I have succeeded in proving that, even though the extant social order puts many obstacles in the way of the establishment of sexual freedom, a regime of freedom offers more advantages and entails fewer perils than does the prevailing system of prohibition and intolerance.

This opinion will be strongly confirmed as our studies proceed, and we come to consider in detail the reforms which legitimacy and sexual freedom must necessarily involve.

Some will declare that sexual freedom runs counter to such institutions as marriage and the family. The answer is that we cannot say whether the criticism is valid until we have ascertained what happens to marriage and the family under the present regime, and how far the principles of sexual legitimacy may need modification so that what is good in marriage and the family may be preserved. These matters will be considered in due course. It would be premature, therefore, to reply to anxious criticisms of sexual

freedom on the ground that this may work mischief in the current social order, until we have examined that order, considered its axioms, asked what services it renders, found out how far it is compatible, how far incompatible, with the principles of legitimacy.

## CHAPTER VI

### WOMAN AND SEXUAL ACTIVITIES

Sexual Parasitism of Woman.—Social Idea of Woman's Inferiority—Comparison between the Sexual Activities of Man and Woman.

Before examining the necessary outcome of the principles of legitimacy and sexual freedom, it will be well to undertake (without going too deep into physiology) an objective study of some of the data involved. In the sexual sphere we can watch our tragic comedians; sit as spectators of a play which is staged century after century, always with the same plot, and varying little in the wording; but one from which mankind, despite his blindness, has derived experience which people are at length beginning to turn to some account. The actors are invariably the same; woman and man, engrossed in the drama, clever at profiting by it, but often made fools of, and sometimes seriously injured. Being ourselves audience as well as players, we can make some observations that bear on our topic, and will do so before discussing what social conditions derive from our principles, whether for the reproduction of the species or for unfettered sexual enjoyment.

*Sexual Parasitism of Woman.*—Woman's sexual parasitism is innate. She has a congenital tendency to rely on man for support, availing herself of her sexual arts, offering in return for maintenance (and more, if she can get it) the partial or complete possession of her person.

There are few women who fail to understand that their sexual charms can secure for them a "position in life" which puts them above the need for independent exertion. When calculating her chances in the struggle for existence, a girl

puts on the credit side her personal attractions, the "sex appeal" which will induce a man to work for her so that, forthwith or by degrees, she will secure money, status, leisure. Far from being ashamed of her sex (as some facile theorists would have us believe), woman is extremely proud of her genital organs. They are the centre of her power to give men incomparable pleasure. She would be amazed if they were neglected, undervalued, despised; and she counts on them to provide for her future, and perhaps lead her to unexpected heights. Why should anyone think the worse of her for this, since we all have to make the most of our chances in an inhospitable world? Let us have the frankness to recognise facts, the intelligence to organise them; and, as concerns the man who will have to pay the shot, the decency to warn him what he is about.

This conception of woman and her role is as old as the world, woman's own conception, anchored in every brain, not excepting those of the most ardent champions of women's rights. Since her body and her sex are passionately desired by the male, who will risk his life to secure them; since these weapons are always at her disposal and cost her nothing; since chance or her own ability to use them may bring her happiness, wealth, power, and fame—why should not she enjoy nature's gifts to the full? She does not lack examples of thousands upon thousands who have done so, in the past or under her own eyes. Since these things are so, it would be strange if she did not make this inestimable and overwhelming advantage the pivot of her existence.

But it will be well, at the outset, to speak of those who are obvious exceptions. These are the disinherited, to whom nature, in allotting face or form, has been unkindly, and those whom accident has blemished beyond repair. These exceptions do not invalidate the rule; they are only soldiers who have been disarmed. Besides, in early youth they usually enjoy several years of hope and satisfaction, since for many men youth in a partner will more than compensate for the

lack of other charms. They sometimes win a "consolation prize" in the race, and a seeming bodily defect may bring a young woman unexpected success. But the disinherited should begin life early, for youth is fleeting; and it is an added cruelty when law and custom rob these afflicted ones of their chance.

A woman's supreme opportunity is, then, that which is furnished her because, by her youth or her beauty, and without effort or labour on her side, she will be in request as a partner in sexual pleasure, will be eagerly sought by a smaller or larger number of men. Thus every woman, though she is the quarry, is also, more or less openly, a huntress. The annexation of a man will give her security, ease, leisure, and she therefore considers, or feigns to consider, the gift of herself a boon whose value is perpetually enhanced by the folly of the male, by specialised passion, by jealousy, by the desire for exclusive possession.

This ever-present possibility of minting her sex into coin of the realm or its equivalent, this unceasing speculation upon the inanities of masculine desire, explain why, throughout the ages, there has never really existed in women any repugnance for the systems of masculine appropriation—although the modern apostles of "feminine dignity" loudly proclaim this repugnance to be its most essential feature. The methods of appropriation matter much less to women than the practical results. She knows that by selling herself she will be able to better her position in the world, to win a safe place; and that, with luck, the use of her bodily talents (which no woman is inclined to underrate), may secure one of the big prizes in life's lottery. Sale or contract, monogamy or harem—these words mean little to her in comparison with the goal. No impartial observer can fail to recognise that the high-flown phrases bandied about by the anti-sexuals are of no moment to the great majority of women, who rarely shrink from machinations which will enable their sex appeal to secure them the benefits of

an easy, tranquil, stable career. Little do they care about the charges that they are "meretricious" or what not, showered on them by Social Workers and the like. In former days Caucasian women were often eager to be bought as inmates of the harems of wealthy Ottomans; and the curious may read a letter to the grand Turk penned by certain schoolgirls at the Convent of l'Abbaye-aux-Bois asking the eastern potentate to carry off the lot of them to the gilded cage of his seraglio. In 1830, at Navarino, the officers of the Egyptian levies bought concubines, most of whom were Greeks captured when Missolonghi fell. They were, with few exceptions, contented with their lot, as the officers of the French expeditionary force learned. So satisfied were these young women that "they would not avail themselves of the clause in the capitulation whereby they might have regained freedom, preferring to go to Egypt with their masters" (René Puaux). Following the rules of the game, westerners of that date expressed great surprise "at this apparent aberration". We, however, shall not be astonished that Musulman girls did not usually repine after having "given themselves" (such is the consecrated expression, but they were usually paid for in hard cash) to a man. Malcontents are of recent date, now that, in the New Turkey, revolution is in full swing. In the old Ottoman Empire, only a few years ago, women were still convinced that the best way of securing a tolerable life, tranquillity, and happiness, was by blind submission to a husband chosen for them—their sole ambition being to become his favourite.

That is, indeed, woman's chief aim, though the modalities vary with time and place. The forms taken by this universal gamble, or by the inexorable battle of the sexes, may be classified in two categories, that which is conventionally regarded as permissible, and that which is suspect.

In countries where courtesans are not looked on with disfavour or hunted down, a woman's direct sale of her favours is held to be normal and respectable. The result is,

less hypocrisy and more frankness. With the case of the famous O'Murphy whom Casanova deposited in the bed of Louis XV we may class thousands of kindred instances culled at random from the pages of history—to say nothing of the “fortunate” marriages in which a woman sells herself for a position. As for the women who do not wish to be unclassed by becoming courtesans, they can easily retain their social status with the aid of a little window-dressing, by becoming actresses, dancers, artistes, etc.; or instead of, as does the meretrix, earning a money fee, they may use their sex appeal to secure non-pecuniary advantages for themselves, husbands, relatives.

If she is even more squeamish, a woman will avoid the reproach of harlotry by sedulous regard for the sanctities of marriage, but this is merely a change of the currency in which she demands payment. Under the aegis of matrimony, a woman, giving her body, pledges herself to reserve it exclusively for her husband; in return she expects position, respect, the advantages of wealth. If she does not get them, she has made a bad marriage, has been bilked—unless she is so ill-favoured that she could not expect to do better for herself. What, in plain English, do all women seek in marriage, if it be not maintenance? They are educated for success in the marriage market. As far as law and custom allow (and they know how to stretch a point), they advertise their wares. In Anglo-Saxon countries they bring “breach of promise” suits, the promise having been craftily extracted, or sometimes invented out of whole cloth, but they will get heavy damages. They have a talent for “compromising” themselves that they may trade on their supposed misfortune. Wearying of the bonds of marriage, they will seek divorce, but will be careful to secure, if they can, a handsome alimony which the poor boob of a husband will have to go on paying for the rest of his days.

For centuries girls of the middle and upper classes have been educated with a sole eye to marriage, which was more



than a destiny, being a profession. A "good" marriage would bring ease, fortune, respect, not only to the girl chiefly concerned, but to her family, which unblushingly wanted to profit by the occasion. If the Arabs speak bluntly of selling a daughter this is because they have a way of calling a spade a spade, whether in ordinary life or in a legal code. Until recent times, moreover, westerners were almost as frank, girls not being consulted about the choice of a husband and often married off against their will.

Marriage brokers have always insisted upon the young woman's beauty and charm; and upon her virginity when this was considered important or had a price in the market. It was convention that drew a dividing line between the bourgeois family which sanctimoniously profited by these advantages, and Madame Cardinal (in Ludovic Halévy's fantasy) who enjoyed them outside the barriers of wedlock; and the only thing which troubled Monsieur Cardinal was that he did not live on what was regarded as the respectable side of the fence. In either case it was feminine flesh which tipped the scale and won the victory. Such civilisations as ours claim a moral superiority over those in which woman, undisguisedly courtesan, stands out for her price. Fundamentally, in either case, woman has a price, but it is expressed in different languages here and elsewhere, leading to different kinds of social behaviour. Sometimes language gives away the show, as when a girl who has been deflowered is said to have lost the "treasure" of her virginity. The family, when a daughter has a lovely face or a fine figure, expects her to turn these advantages to account by making a good and lucrative marriage.

In many cases the girl's preoccupation with the possibilities of marriage is disclosed by superstitious rites with the aid of which she hopes to better her chances. "In the department of Ain is an erratic boulder on the top of which are from fifty to sixty pot-holes. When maidens and widows are on pilgrimage to Saint-Blaise, they stop there a while

and go through certain observances which are expected to bring them a husband within the year." (Dr. Verneau, *L'homme*, p. 39.) Hundreds of similar examples could be given. Did you ever read a book entitled *Fascinating Womanhood*? Here, in Byron's words, we are told that love "is woman's whole existence". Chapter VIII contains an account of the fourteen best ways in which a woman can make sure of a man. "The fourteen most trustworthy devices will now be described in detail, that our lady readers can try them on any man they wish to fascinate. These stratagems alone are well worth the money. Every girl who has mastered our teaching will be able to twist men round her little finger." The price of the book is twenty-five shillings, a considerable sacrifice, but "worth while". Consider the title of Chapter V, "Inspiring the Proposal". We learn "how to bring a man to the point when the omens are favourable, . . . how to create romantic situations, . . . how to make it practically impossible for a man not to propose". On page after page are items that show "how clever women can steer different types of men through these ticklish waters".

Thus does woman mint man's desire into a proposal of marriage, man's desire being woman's opportunity, and this being her natural field of industry. Thus can debts be paid, local or national hatreds extinguished, political or financial alliances be cemented, families rescued from poverty or decay, great houses be built. How hypocritical it is to speak of the White Slave Trade only as a means for recruiting the ranks of prostitution. The White Slave Trade is universal, being carried on with the consent of the "slaves", since every woman has a specific sexual value. She must sell herself to the highest bidder, even though she cheat as to the quality of the goods. Woman works when she must (because the proper market is closed to her); but in her secret heart she would always prefer leisure to work, would prefer "far niente", elegant idleness, a mere semblance of activity, the

sterile activities of the privileged. A woman who works for a livelihood is a woman who has had no luck; for a quiet home life, a family, or the position of a successful worldling, are all of them—for a woman—the outcome of sexual good luck. Among those who, following the most ordinary rule, become contented wives with numerous progeny, the prize obtained in the lottery of sex was the turning-point in the career. Thus we always see woman revolving in her orbit round the excitable male as she calculates the value of her attractions; western women of birth and breeding who seek a well-conducted man of station; eastern women fully aware of the charms which will, sooner or later, find a market; far-seeing native girls in distant colonies whose dream it is to become the envied "keep" of a rich and powerful white man; emancipated women who have decided to seek outside the bonds of wedlock a succession of lucrative intimacies; feminists who have abandoned a life of protest against a man-made world to accept the comfortable slavery of a wife of the old school—all, all without exception, trade in their sex; though some of them are bad women of business who risk bankruptcy by too cynical a proclamation of the man-hunt. This is the real White Slave Traffic, and some of the most unashamed of modern American women make a good thing of it, under the protection of too complaisant laws.

Here is an excellent example of such modern parasitism, which I take from Judge Lindsey's *The Companionate Marriage* (p. 259): "A Denver lawyer told me the other day that he lately represented a man of forty in a divorce case against the man's wife, aged twenty-eight. It was shown at the hearing that the wife was employed by a large corporation at a salary of \$150 a month, and that the husband was making \$200 a month. The court ordered the husband to pay the wife's lawyer \$200 attorney fees, and to pay his wife \$75 a month alimony. Thus the husband's income was reduced to \$125 a month; and the wife's income was raised,

without a cent of cost to her, to a clear \$225 a month. The husband had to pay her lawyer and his own lawyer, the court costs—all in addition to \$75 a month alimony. . . . There isn't a day that I don't come in contact with these pompous stupidities of the law."

In former days, throughout the Far East, the sale of girls destined to become geishas, singers, and the like, was common form. Deferring to western standards which they have never critically examined, and afraid of being considered "uncivilised", the Japanese have passed laws against the practice, which goes on none the less under the rose. Moreover the girl "victims" are, for the most part, well pleased with their lot, and by no means inclined to thank the western philanthropists who try to "rescue" them. With the prospect of marriage, sometimes a brilliant match, to a fascinated client always in view, these Far Eastern women have, for centuries, led lives much happier than those of their "enfranchised" sisters who, in countries bordering on the Atlantic, have to slave as shorthand-typists or shop-assistants.

Many married women nowadays firmly believe, and some even frankly avow, that a man's exclusive possession of a pretty woman is a luxury, and a costly one. They would not dream, therefore, of permanent union with a man who cannot provide them with an auto, a varied assortment of fashionable gowns, the advantages of travel; and they will not hesitate to abandon a husband who proves unequal to the task. This minting of feminine charms is but a variant of courtesanship, and it is only the falseness of our standards and our fetishist worship of holy matrimony which prevent our openly alluding to its meretricious character.

Women in general are consequently opposed to the legal facilitation of divorce and of free unions, as we see even in Soviet Russia. Not being yet ready to assume responsibility for making their own livelihood, they still regard parasitism on the male as their ideal, and if possible parasi-

tism upon one "host", a man able to provide a stable position. They have no concern for particular instances, looking rather to a general rule which will be advantageous to them and give them an undeniable status—that of the woman who bestows her sex (her "charms" is the polite word) in exchange for the best maintenance obtainable. Thus, to the greater glory of specialised love and in defiance of the teaching of experience, they would rather ask "do you love me?" than "do you want me?"—since they think that "love", specialised love, will give them that guarantee of permanence which is most congenial to a parasite.

Few women escape this destiny, and most of the exceptions are sore at heart because they have not been among the chosen. Still, they try to console themselves by hanging out the sign of a splendid isolation which no man has wished to terminate. The only woman who could be regarded as sincere in such a theory would be one firmly convinced of the equality of the sexes, determined to "live her own life" without parasitism, and unhesitatingly acting upon the mechanistic theory of sexual acts. Does such a woman exist? Would she not, in her secret heart, remain convinced that a man's business is to give, a woman's to receive?

For the parasitism of woman assumes multifarious forms, and is so much second nature that it may be regarded as a commonplace. Woman is born an importunate beggar. To her, every occasion seems suitable for asking favours; and she secures them by exerting her sex dominion over the complaisant male—in which she is perfectly right. Gallantry (in the French sense, the quality being typically French) is man's admission that his business in life is to gratify woman's caprices. She has established a social code in virtue of which she can demand gifts without making a return. No woman accompanied by a man dreams of paying her share of the luncheon, the seats in a theatre, the taxi, or other expenses of any joint amusement. This is among the petty manifestations of her parasitism, but we

should regard a man who did the same thing as a sponge. She accepts presents as a natural tribute, and knows how to invite them by a reminder that it is her birthday or some other significant anniversary. With the triumph of parasitism are associated her arrogant little ways of expecting a man to give up his seat in a bus, to play the cavalier, to be the first at a rendezvous, to put up with her caprices, to excuse her fibs—and to comply with a thousand other demands which are the everyday “privileges of the fair sex”.

Let me agree without demur that this is a pitiless analysis. But though I am calling things by their true names, supplying no garnish, I do not condemn the system. Condemnation would be foolish, since such is woman’s intrinsic nature. It would be a mistake to condemn, for all that I have been describing is part of feminine charm, and serves only to make men graceful and refined in their relations with woman—provided, of course she does not push her foible to the extreme of becoming a mere “gold-digger”. But we must understand what we are doing, and must not be so hypocritical as to pretend that things are otherwise than they are. We strip off a mask, and say that if women think themselves entitled to ask for any boon, and if men are ready to accede—the rock-bottom cause is not a vague “instinct of chivalry”, or a (needless) desire to “protect” women. No, the rock-bottom cause is, in the male, the chase, the hope of securing a woman’s favour in the ultimate sense of the term, or even no more than a partial possession of the woman he cozens and flatters; and in the female, her knowledge of man’s need and her determination to profit thereby. She gives a quid pro quo, albeit only, in many cases, her presence, her company, her smile—which are worth whatever one fancies, and have at times inestimable value.

This exchange has very numerous forms, which vary with time and place, with education, country, and the woman’s own sensuality (thanks to which she is sometimes caught

in her own snare). Man pays in many currencies, sometimes "saying it with flowers", and sometimes at the cost of his life. Woman sells as her fancy dictates, according a glance, a touch, a walk together, permitting a few caresses, or giving herself without reserve. She considers that she makes sufficient return when she uses coins of her own minting, which may range in value from a languishing smile to complete surrender, passing by way of increasingly intimate contacts and the pleasures of mutual masturbation. Are we to say that the return often expected from a woman is that she should take charge of a man's household? This is assuredly a trifling burden, and by shouldering it she secures many of the advantages she covets, such as parties, luxury, the chance of display, satisfying her vanity, and so on. Or should we point out that a married woman can compensate her husband in various ways, by help and good advice? No doubt this sometimes happens, when the omens are propitious: but more often her "help" and "advice" are disastrous or tyrannical; while a courtesan or a "lady friend" is no less able than a wife to play the part of counsellor, and myriads of them have been off-stage Egerias.

What is indulgently called "coquetry" (I do not criticise the indulgence) is only the mobilisation of a woman's forces for the great battle of the sexes. Christians have denounced it as a sign of immodesty; and priests, instructed by the confessional and by their campaign against the manifestations of sex, shrewdly discern the sexual motif which unquestionably lurks in the background. The aim of coquetry, with its attendant train of glances, ornaments, stealth, and semi-nudity, is the showing off and enhancing the value of the physical, and therefore of its most essential element sex. Thus the desire of the male is intensified until his judgment grows clouded, and he will be ready to pay any price to gain his end, surrendering independence or money or both. The importance attached to dress and jewelry derives much less from artistic or aesthetic con-

siderations, than from a determination to stimulate masculine desire. The whims of fashion are an appeal to the love of novelty. In modern times the women of the West have invented provocative dishabilles, by means of which, to the despair of popes and bishops, religious prohibitions are evaded. This is merely a hypocritical return to the frank nudity of earlier days or other climes. Make-up and false hair are used to compensate for the ravages of time. Gestures are studied. Miklucho-Maclay, writing of New Guinea, tells us that "Papuan women are early taught to make swinging movements of the buttocks when men are looking at them, for when unobserved they walk quite naturally". (R. Verneau, *L'homme*, p. 324.) But we need not go so far across the seas to watch women do this. Many European and Mongolian women, though uninstructed by the elders, learn to sway their hips provocatively, and do so by the light of nature whenever they are within sight of a man whom they want to allure by drawing attention to this part of their anatomy.

Coquetry is nothing more than a sort of road-repair, a maintenance of the highway which will lead, by stages whose length varies in accordance with the advantages obtainable, to minor favours granted in privacy, to partial surrender, or (if the compensation be sufficient) to a lowering of the flag and complete delivery of the fortress. The world is one huge market, always open, for sexual deals, every woman having her price and being fully aware of what she wants to sell. She is very careful to maintain this value, of which she can make much during wars and conquests. I could quote examples by the thousand, from all ages and from every land, but I shall be content with a salient instance drawn from the Dark Continent during the nineteenth century. Speke, in his *Journal of the Discovery of the Sources of the Nile* (1863), tells us that in African monarchies of some importance—as was King Mtesa's Uganda in those days before the British annexation—the king would some-



times bring back from a victorious expedition large numbers of women whom he would distribute among his favoured generals. These gifts were apt to be rather embarrassing, as when a man of note was given several hundred wives. To refuse would probably have cost him his life, so he had to accept with a good grace and be lavish with his thanks. Then, of course, he would take his pick of the ladies, and sell the rest as slaves.

Early in life girls become aware of the advantages they can derive from being coveted by the male, and are not slow to turn them to account. Before puberty, they are already coquettes, showing off, wriggling as they walk, making the most of their hair, and using various enticements to manifest the feminine will-to-power. Among the Kabyles a little girl will follow a traveller along the road, lift her gandourah to show her private parts, and beg a coin as reward. Eastern girls, earlier informed about sexual matters than those of the West, are when scarcely more than children ripe for intimacies in return for money or trinkets, and mention the price in plain terms. Here in the West the courts often deal with cases in which girls under age have unhesitatingly offered themselves for money or sweets. However carefully brought up and sedulously watched, they will make sheep's eyes at any male visitor whom they believe well enough off to give them nice presents, and know without prompting that they have something which can bring them advantages their brothers, less well equipped in sexual matters, could not possibly obtain. Their overtures are not necessarily platonic, as we shall learn in detail when, in the sixth volume of these studies (*The State and Sexual Acts*), we come to examine the sexual psychology of children.

Much later, during the years of decline, women do their utmost to disguise their age. They devote a great deal of time and money to cosmetic arts, hoping, at long last, to achieve (through divorce if needs must) the successful marriage which will enable them to pass the rest of life in

opulence and splendour. Many women well deserve H. G. Wells' harsh words, in his novel *Marriage*: "A woman gives herself to a man for love, and then clings to him like a parasitic plant for the rest of her days." Every reader will have known cases which confirm this generalisation.

The question of remuneration, about which such a fuss is made where courtesans are concerned, will not disturb men, except for the unthinking and unobservant, who declare that any meretricious element is necessarily repulsive. Throughout the history of mankind, woman has always expected reward for bestowing her favours. We learn from J. J. Bouchard that in his day a shepherdess's fee was very low. He struck a bargain with one of them at two sous for the first contact and afterwards one sou a time. During the reign of St. Stephen first king of Hungary (reigned 1000-1038), a count who killed his wife had to pay her parents fifty oxen in compensation and to fast several days. The value of woman is on the up-grade as concerns those of the very modern American type described by Anita Loos (*Gentlemen prefer Blondes*), for she gives us a precise notion of the costly gifts a lady is entitled to expect from a man to whom she grants her favours. Still, though the forms vary, the general rule holds. Of course a woman cannot give a more signal mark of her affection for a man than by doing for him what she regards as due to her from him—by paying his expenses. Here her passion leads her to reverse the customary roles. But if in this case her parasitic instinct is in abeyance, she is only giving a more emphatic expression of her sense of her own value by renouncing parasitism in favour of someone whom she loves.

What matters is that we should be frank in our judgment of these situations, in recognising the nature of a woman's value from the sexual standpoint, thanks to which one with a pretty face and a good figure will necessarily make her way in the world better than one without these advantages. We must not be humbugged by the veneer with which ageing

civilisations, where all such problems have assumed a false aspect, try to hide the facts of women's parasitism beneath flattering conventions intended to safeguard their self-esteem.

Weininger, Bauer tells us, brought to light what he called woman's procuress-instinct. He stressed the way in which the mother of marriageable daughters tries to show their advantages and get them well placed in the world. Anti-sexual conventions notwithstanding, no opportunity is lost for stimulating a bachelor's sexual impulse, that he may blindly pursue the woman who is, in reality, the huntress. No demur is made so long as the merchandise is labelled "for marriage". Nothing but social convention can draw a distinction between such practices, those of Madame Cardinal, and those of a professional bawd. I think these devices to secure matrimony are closely akin to a woman's own instinct, which induces her to show off before the male and push her advantages. When she is growing old, so that she can no longer expect to make a man desire her, she vicariously enjoys giving the younger members of her sex a chance—her daughters or her girl friends—and she uses her experience of man's foibles in their service. The obvious pleasure with which a middle-aged woman plays the go-between to help her younger sisters to sexual relations with men, emphasises her understanding of her natural role—unless she has been perverted by religious dogma or anti-sexual social convention. One who tries to check feminine activities of this kind, runs counter to woman's essential nature; and, if they are successfully checked by vigorous training with the aid of atavistic taboos, neither sex will gain thereby, while our race will be deprived of its last chance of avoiding extinction. The fact is that the above-described methods of sexual allurements are thoroughly commendable if only we look at them without tinted spectacles.

One point must still be cleared up.

In describing the parasitism of women, have I been inveighing against it in the spirit of a mealy-mouthed moralist? Not for a moment. I have been no more than a dispassionate analyst, bent on describing things as they are. Parasitism in women is the natural outcome of universal and necessary sex relations, and I cannot conceive any change in customs, any reform of social organisation, which could make an end of it once and for all. Nor is its disappearance "a consummation devoutly to be wished". Man values and enjoys being thus exploited. Unless he is a dunderhead he will not allow his fleece to be clipped too close, and will stand to gain as well as lose. There are many advantages in being a parasite, and we must not despoil woman of them, but we need not let her imagine that we are wholly duped. Man may thoroughly enjoy being the "host" of this pretty parasite, provided that he fully understands his position. If, however, we agree that the parasitism of woman is an acceptable social institution (and what else can we do?), we must not, for that, allow ourselves to be hoodwinked.

To conclude, an interesting question arises. Since young women are so much disposed to mint their bodily attractions into coin of the realm or its equivalent, why is this practice less common in young men? Sexual desire in women is just as active as sexual desire in men, and there have been innumerable instances in which men have been seduced or "led astray" by women. Surely, then, a man could profit by the desire he arouses in a woman, and become parasitic on her—as does, in fact, a gigolo. Yet whereas the gigolo is a rare type, woman is almost universally parasitic. We can probably explain this by the physiological differences between the sexes in the higher mammals. Because man is physically stronger and bigger than woman, he, from early days, made a practice of possessing her by force, willy-nilly. Strength became the foundation of brutal conquest. There can be no doubt that the primitive

male would "stand no nonsense from" the primitive female. He was the pursuer, and took what he wanted, with the result that, almost invariably, the initiative was his. Since woman could not equal man in strength, she resorted to cunning, establishing her dominion by subterfuge. She learned coquetry, which was superfluous in man's wooing, and took her revenge by making men pay dearly for her possession. I must add, as another fundamental cause of the psychological and social differences between the sexes, that women can have an almost indefinite number of acts of coitus in brief succession, whilst even the most vigorous of men speedily flags. A woman is equipped by nature for the life of a courtesan plying for hire; and a man is not, so far as "normal" or heterosexual relations are concerned. No man can have intercourse thirty or forty times a night, as may happen to the women in certain brothels.

Still, the distinction is not universal. There always have been and there always will be men who profit by their sex appeal. To say nothing of professional male prostitutes, history and everyday experience point to numbers of men who "get on in the world" because women like them. Such cases are much commoner than is usually supposed, the men in question being those who, in addition to being physically attractive, have a strong taste for living without exertion. But they are not conspicuous, either because the advantages gained by such parasitic men are less obvious than those gained by parasitic women, or else because obliging women are more discreet than beneficent men.

*Social Idea of Woman's Inferiority.*—Jeremias Gotthelf (Albert Bitzius) tells us that at Berne, when a girl was born, the cradle was placed under the table, to teach her from the first the humility proper to her sex. This symbolism, which latter-day feminists will unquestionably consider old-fashioned, is typical of the opinion that used to prevail among men as to the inferiority of women—a view which most women shared. In certain parts of Russia it was still

customary, far on into the nineteenth century, for a wife on her wedding day to give her husband a whip of her own making, emblematic of the chastisement she would deserve and receive if she disobeyed him. Honours accruing to a woman, political and social privileges, even accession to the throne in her own right, were never looked upon as more than lucky chances which did not affect the principle of feminine inferiority; and such rulers as Elisabeth Tudor, Catherine the Great, Christina of Sweden, Maria Theresa, and the late Queen Victoria, never dreamed of trying to use their power to improve the status of their sisters. They shared the outlook of the Bernese. [Empress Theodora, who had been a "loose woman" before she married Justinian, was a notable exception.]

Woman's inferiority to man was thus regarded as axiomatic. Of course she was unrivalled in certain fields where man did not try to compete—grace, beauty, elegance. She could take her revenge in the alcove, and this was at times a great consolation. But naturally she did not do so in the foreground of social life. In ancient Greece, the matron was for use rather than for ornament or delight. When Simonides compared her to the weasel, the mare, the bee, or the house-dog, this was not mere metaphor, but a good-natured reference to the sort of services expected from her. M. H. E. Meier tells us with good reason that the Hellene took a wife to be a nurse to his children, a housekeeper, a caretaker. The things that mattered—government, religion, war, diplomacy, justice—were outside her sphere. She was debarred from them by her essential inferiority. [The relevant passage will be found in the seventeenth and concluding section of the learned author's *Päderastie*, an article contributed in 1837 to the *Allgemeine Encyklopädie der Wissenschaften und Künste*. There is no English translation. Guyon quotes from Pagey-Castries' French version, *Histoire de l'amour grec*].

The guiding thought of Confucius is that man is the chief;

he orders, and his wife obeys. Such principles have governed the relations between the sexes everywhere and at all times down to the present century, when the feminist challenge became formidable. During the reign of Ho Ti (89-106 A.D.), the famous Pan Hoey-pan, literary instructress to the Empress, wrote a treatise in seven sections on *A Wife's Duties*. We learn from this that the wife should pay unlimited respect to her husband and to the family of which she has become a member. In section 5 we read: "When a girl passes from the paternal home to that of her husband, she forfeits everything, even her name, and retains nothing of her own. What she carries, what she is, her whole self, everything, belongs to him who takes her as his wife." Again: "The husband is the wife's heaven." According to *The Book of Laws for Women*: "If a woman has a husband after her own heart, she has him for her whole life; if she has a husband not after her own heart, she has him for her whole life. In the former case the wife is happy for always; in the latter case she is unhappy, and her unhappiness will not end till she ceases to breathe." Article 6 imposes on her unqualified obedience to the husband and to his parents. "In her husband's house, the wife should be no more than a shadow and an echo. . . . The form of the shadow is given by that of the body which casts it; the echo says only what the speaker wishes." I need hardly say that the shadow is told never to contradict her husband's parents, and not to answer back if they contradict her. The Chinese Court greatly approved of this work, and Ma Yung, who was president of the Department of Letters, made his wife learn by heart a manual "admirably fitted to make a woman what she should be". Nevertheless in China there have been Empresses who were anything but shadows.

I need not accumulate instances of the subjection of women. An enquiry into its causes will be of greater interest. In the *Book of Genesis*, and in most other works on human origins, the creation of woman is described as secondary

to that of man, both in time and space. She comes into being as man's helpmate, who often serves merely as a lining to his personality, or plays the part of his domestic. In *Genesis* iii. 16, the Lord says to the woman: "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." St. Paul confirms this: "Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man." Obviously these stories of the creation are a simple reflex of primitive views, translating a fact, the social inferiority of women, into a legend intended to justify it.

Christianity consistently despised women, while making a shrewd use of them. St. Paul's teaching endorsed the old Hebrew notion concerning the uncleanness of woman. Tertullian, one of the most famous of the Early Christian Fathers, started the doctrine that woman was the gate of hell. This opinion, remarkable in a day when people had a vivid belief in hell as a place of eternal torment, will hardly make men fight shy of women in these incredulous times.

A classical prayer of the Arabs, another branch of the Semitic race, is: "Allah defend us from sickness, poverty, and woman." In the countries now under the rule of Islam, prior to the days of Mohammed the position of women was that of slaves without any safeguards. They were taken or dismissed at will by the men, a wife being a chattel, and a widow part of her late husband's estate on the same footing as his horse or his tent. Girl babies regarded as superfluous were buried alive, as we drown kittens of either sex. In their attitude towards women, the Arabs were not pioneers. So many primitive peoples have passed through the same phase that we cannot but wonder whether it was not an inevitable one in human social evolution. The Koran, at length, gave woman a legal status, but men were still declared to be superior to women, and there is no ground



for describing the Prophet as a feminist. What he aimed at was to lay down rules for conjugal relations; and since women played practically no part in public life, it did not occur to him that anything need be said about that matter. Woman remained an inferior being; she had no soul, and existed only for man's pleasure. L. Dubeux writes: "The Musulman religion sanctions, if it does not expressly command, the practice of keeping women in a servile state." We must recognise that this was the starting-point if we are to understand the development of matrimonial customs among Mohammedans, for there was nothing to prevent a favourite wife or concubine from governing a household or guiding the destinies of a kingdom as well as or better than if she had been equipped with the western democratic rights of suffrage and eligibility for election.

The Occidental attitude towards woman was the fruit of Judeo-Christian doctrine. Eve was the cause of the Fall, responsible for original sin, the instrument of Satan. Eve's daughters continued to play this disastrous role through the ages. The enmity of male Christians for women was the outcome of mingled terror and wrath, these being all the more rancorous because woman remained the temptress, and desire for her mastered man's determination to shun her wiles. Here lay the foundations of an anti-sexual policy rooted in peculiar metaphysical or religious considerations which established it far more firmly than if it had been merely grounded on reasonable recognition of woman's inferiority.

The explanation of woman's social inferiority is thus psychological rather than historical.

We cannot seriously believe that woman's sexual characteristics, however different from those of man, can have aroused disgust in the latter. The whole story of love-relations gives such a notion the lie, and we know that it is precisely the differentiae of womanhood which make the eternal feminine so alluring. We must not be misled by

certain physiological diatribes common in the West among misogynists. The author of a recent work (Dr. O. Béliard, *Le marquis de Sade*, p. 167) writes of woman as "defenceless before man's desire and instrument of his pleasure, . . . she may be compared with the passive and serviceable water into which slops are thrown, . . . as useful and discreditable as a sink." The instant we read, we recognise the familiar epithets of the anti-sexual vocabulary for there breathes from the words just quoted all the hostility which sways the minds of the Judeo-Christians because of their hatred for the sex which (they believe) brought sin into the world. These venomous similes that have done so much to embroil the relations between the sexes in the West, would only be valid if they were of universal application. But other races than those which take their metaphysics from the Jews and the Christians, being more reasonable and open-minded than we are, will have nothing to do with such nonsense. They hold that woman plays as useful a part as man in ministering to the joint sexual pleasure, each contributing a quota, and each finding the other indispensable. Neither in Asia nor in Polynesia is a man filled with contempt for his partner after performing the sexual act, as western men too often are because she has "tempted them to sin", and this feeling makes their detestation of and brutality to the courtesan seem right in their own eyes. There is nothing natural in such an attitude, for when we study other peoples we see that they are free from it, and we know that among ourselves it must be the outcome of perverted sensibilities. But even here we can have sanity restored by acceptance of the notion of sexual legitimacy.

Have we, on the other hand to admit (still confining our attention to the physiological field) that woman's smaller stature, less robust build, and comparative muscular weakness account alike for primitive man's disdain of woman and for his enslavement of her? This is probably a partial explanation, but it is no more, and the part is inconsider-

able. Although, throughout the world, the average woman is less vigorous and less robust than the average man, there are a great many exceptions—enough of them to invalidate the rule. Everyone knows a number of married couples in which the wife can, as far as physique is concerned, give the husband points and a beating. Primitives, whose way it was to treat women as beasts of burden, knew this very well. If the social inferiority of women depended exclusively on inferior strength, history would tell us of revolutions in which woman established physical equality or superiority—especially when the numbers of males in the tribe or State had been greatly reduced by internecine warfare. Some other explanation of women's social inferiority must, therefore, be found.

Besides, woman's social inferiority has never lowered her intrinsic value in man's eyes. He has never ceased to value her highly, perhaps more in primitive times when she was both wife and maid-of-all-work than now when her keep is apt to cost more than her strictly economic worth. No doubt there have been times when and places where the female birth-rate seemed excessive, and girl babies were killed off without more ado. Only boys were worth bringing up, for they could tend the family, guard the clan, look after the old (when these were not simply knocked on the head, and eaten unless too tough). In times of scarcity, women were suppressed as useless mouths. We must not make too much of this idea, remembering that among the Musulmans, the Chinese, etc., a pretty woman is valuable property. But Chinese and Musulmans are not primitives. "Among the Abipones of South America", writes J. G. Frazer (*Totemism and Exogamy*, vol. iv, p. 79) "the custom of infanticide was very common. . . . The mothers more usually spared their female than their male infants, not because daughters were dearer to them than sons, but because they were much more profitable in the marriage market." He adds on the next page: "It might be inferred

that where the purchase of wives is not in vogue, one of the best guarantees for the purchase of female infants is absent, and that accordingly in such communities the practice of female infanticide may rage unchecked."

With an eye to the economic laws which determine a woman's value, we interpret this as signifying that the Abipones found it worth while to preserve them as "natural wealth"—which not only sufficed at times to procure them immunity in societies practising infanticide, but brings them far-reaching privileges in modern social groups. This economic aspect of the problem of woman's position is one which feminists are too apt to ignore.

Whether woman likes it or not, nature prescribes that she shall be one of man's luxuries, just as diamonds, or statues from the Age of Pericles, are luxuries. We oversimplify when we try to regulate the relations between men and women without taking this fact into account, much as if, more generally, we should want to understand the nature of human society without reference to the elementary feelings of men and women. Woman has no objection to being treated as a luxury. Even to-day, when feminism is in the ascendant, many ardent woman's righters, regardless of the pursuit of the vote and other items of the feminist programme, look to their own intrinsic value in men's eyes as a means for securing an establishment. Indeed, such women are inclined to put up their price. Men are easily humbugged in bargains of this sort. Although woman's sex appeal certainly commands its price in the market, men have a sex appeal too, and one value should be set off against the other. Women may be excused because of the literature which makes the most of their claims, and because of competitive bidding among men who seek their favour. Still, they are speculating on the chances of what is (after all) a very ordinary act. Men who have freed themselves from the bonds of specialised love are in a strong position here, and are able to put women in their place. Such men

are fond of speaking of the way in which "a pretty woman can turn a man's head". It was a woman, however—Anita Loos—who, in a modern best-seller, made fun of the way in which "gentlemen prefer blondes".

We may therefore infer that man's conviction of woman's inferiority is not the outcome of contempt for them as parasites. He accepts woman's parasitism as part of her nature. If he is well-to-do, it amuses him and he turns it to account. Besides, he does not bother about many other forms of parasitism which might seem far more repellent.

Furthermore, when man's sexual desires lead him to pay a very high price for a woman, he continues to draw a sharp distinction between woman as a sexual companion and woman in social life. Even when he has made great sacrifices to secure one of these luxuries and has done his utmost to satisfy her (sometimes extortionate) demands, we find that he will not fail to regard himself as captain of the ship. The harems of Mohammedan countries and the gynaeceums of the Hellenes were typical in this respect; and, appearances notwithstanding, the "sheltered" and inconspicuous life of Christian women in the Middle Ages and more recent times did not notably differ; while the Fascists make no secret of their determination to restore in the Italian peninsula the old subjection of women [as the Nazis have done in Germany since they rose to power in 1933].

What, then, is the explanation of this widespread conviction that woman is man's inferior? The reason is that man and woman are fundamentally different, and that the difference extends into the psychological realm. Physiologically, of course, men and women differ so much that we might regard them as beings of different species. This does not apply to the reproductive organs alone, for the rest of the bodily systems differ no less in the two sexes. It is the same in all the higher mammals. Even when the outward aspect of male and female is much the same, we

notice differences of build, gait, and posture, so that at the first glance we can distinguish a dog from a bitch, a tom from a she-cat, without looking at their sexual organs. Psychologically the differences between men and women are no less conspicuous. Their respective understandings do not work in the same way, they do not reason alike, and a man's judgment of merits and defects varies from a woman's. The consequence is that men are apt to talk disparagingly of a woman's mental aptitudes—and conversely. Each sex regards the other's way of looking at things as incomprehensible, and does so in all sincerity, this being perhaps the only sincerity in sex relations. I need hardly say that I do not refer to ridiculous intensifications of the doctrine that sexual pleasure is primarily wrong, for this doctrine is not natural but artificial. Apart from that prejudice, men and women are apt to take harsh views of one another. Men declare that women have no interest in general principles, are liars and tricksters, cannot keep a promise, are uninventive, illogical, loose-tongued and indiscreet, let feeling sway reason, and are incapable of forming just views upon matters where their personal interests are involved. Women retort with charges of selfishness, brutality, monopolism. Even when men and women pay one another compliments, there is a sub-flavour of acidity. Man recognises woman's devotion to him when he is ill—but thinks in his secret heart that "all she is fit for is to be a nurse". Woman admires man's pugnacity—but considers that it hardens and brutalises him.

Dr. K. A. Wieth-Knudsen tells us of his powerful reaction to the question of a Japanese who asked: "Why do you European men treat and regard your women with such respect, often amounting to adoration?" Thereby this author was led to devote a considerable part of his life to a detailed enquiry, and wrote a most instructive book entitled, in English translation, *Feminism, a Sociological Study of the Woman Question from Ancient Times to the Present Day*. He has little

respect for the doctrine that men and women are equals. But I must point out at once that we should not take appearances for facts, names for things. In their politeness to courtesans the Japanese show themselves superior to men of the West, who deck a woman with silks and trinkets, but show contempt for her when she becomes his sexual companion. Glorification of woman by man is not peculiar to the West; but if we want to find true glorification, and enthusiastic admiration of the beneficent sex, we must go to the East and to the Isles of the Pacific. The error of the West has been that, not satisfied with woman's bodily charms, we have expected from her as well a number of things about which, at bottom, a man cares little in a woman. Partly, no doubt, this is due to the hypocrisy imposed for centuries by the doctrine of continence, the great enemy of the pleasures of the flesh, and we saw in *Sex Life and Sex Ethics* (pp. 170-175) that "platonic love" was invented as a means of evading taboo. But the men and women of the West have been caught in their own toils. They make a great fuss about the "horrible and degrading" position of women in the non-European countries where women are bought and sold, treated as slaves. Christians pride themselves because their creed has improved the position of women—although in many Christian lands a woman, if she is not bought by her husband, buys him with a dowry. I must again warn the reader against being led astray by words. Let us study the realities which these fine phrases conceal.

Indisputably woman's social inferiority is to be condemned in so far as in consequence of it she is liable to be badly treated, with impunity for the offender, or to be dismissed without safeguard or compensation. This is a matter of individual liberty. Besides, such extreme cases are rare. Women usually have the right to escape from an intolerable position. Even among the Musulmans, though women are completely enslaved, they retain when married all the legal

rights they had before marriage, subject only to restrictions imposed by the marriage contract. Either party can apply for a divorce, or there can be divorce by mutual consent if the wife is prepared to refund any sum expended by the husband in providing her with a jointure.

I have previously explained that many Oriental women have no difficulty in accommodating themselves to a lot which in the West is stigmatised as degrading. They cannot understand why it should be thus regarded. We should always fight shy of enthusiasts who want to force their services as healers upon persons who do not consider themselves ill. This conflict of views is probably based on misunderstanding, and certainly results from the fact that many people are unwilling to "mind their own business"—the desire for impertinent meddling being widespread. A wife who is bought by her husband does not necessarily believe herself to be degraded thereby. Dr. Jacobs tells us that in Senegal a woman's vanity is tickled by the knowledge that a man has paid a long price for her. Here is a typical instance: "A European family, the head of which, a man in the State service, had travelled with me on the transport, came to reside, for economy's sake, in a small brick house at North Point, near the mosque. The wife, a French lady, young and of a friendly disposition, struck up acquaintance with her black neighbours, and engaged as servant a negro girl of about twelve years old. After a while this girl's sister, a splendidly formed young woman of sixteen, called to announce her impending marriage. Her betrothed was a farmer of the taxes, a well-to-do man. She went on to enumerate the fine things her father was receiving in exchange for her. 'But are you not ashamed to let yourself be bought and sold as if you were a cow?' The affronted negress replied: 'What my intended will hand over to my father that he may make me his own proves that he thinks a lot of me, whereas you white women are so ugly that you have to buy your husbands, for without a



dowry you cannot get one.' ” Surely this was a crushing retort?

We hear a great deal about the ill-treatment of wives by their husbands. Exceptionally this may happen among extremely backward races, like the Australian Blackfellows or the New Caledonians; but as far as Arabs, Negroes, or Mongolians are concerned it is beyond question exceedingly rare. Dr. Jacobs rightly points out: “After all, the social position of negresses is no worse than that of many white women. Take France where, in some districts, the women till the soil beside their men folk. If, on returning from war, the chase, or a plundering expedition, a negro finds that everything is not in apple-pie order at home, he may grumble, threaten, and even give his wife a thrashing. Are our own working women in town or countryside any better off? Read Zola’s *L’assommoir* or *La terre* if you want to know whether our vaunted civilisation is so much higher than that of the poor blacks. Negroes and negresses love their children, seldom treat them harshly, and scarcely ever beat them. Of how many civilised parents in Europe can you say the same?” Since Oriental women are satisfied with their lot, show no wish to change it, accommodate themselves to polygamy, and make no fuss when the husband takes a second or third wife, are not we westerners wrong when we seek to persuade them that they are most unfortunate? We ought to realise that our western system is not necessarily the best, since other systems based on very different principles are quite as successful as our own. In view of the failure of the western social system of sex relations, we might do well to agitate for a trial of eastern methods. It is only our vanity which makes such a proposal seem shocking.

Dr. Wieth-Knudsen writes (op. cit., p. 17): “The farther east or the farther south we go, in India, China, or Polynesia, the more struck we are by the essential happiness of women. Rightly or wrongly she finds it a pleasure to

submit, body and mind, to a man, discovering her happiness in devotion to his service. A Norwegian friend of mine, a pastor's daughter whose husband (of the same nationality as herself) is highly placed in the Chinese State service, gave me her impressions of the women of China. One evening, as she watched the river from the veranda of her house, she saw a strange sight. Junk after junk was dropping downstream, usually managed by a woman who stood in the stern. She would have a child clinging to her gown, a couple more playing on the deck, a fourth on her back, a fifth at the breast, a sixth obviously on the way. With a sure and steady hand she steered the boat. Could you have a more distressing picture of woman's humiliation, of woman's servitude? But why did she laugh so merrily, showing her fine, white teeth? Why did her eyes sparkle as she glanced at her husband, lying at ease beneath the awning? Why did she utter cries of delight if he deigned to glance at her with approval? My Norwegian friend has questioned many Chinese women, much as the Japanese I have already referred to questioned me twenty years ago. They all answered in the same terms: 'A man is the finest thing in the world. I can congratulate myself on having a husband, and I must do my utmost to make sure that he will always be pleased with me.' "

I need hardly say that some reserves are needed as regards the western reverence for women of which Dr. Wieth-Knudsen's Japanese acquaintance spoke. In the Middle Ages, for instance, on the authority of the Fathers of the Church, she was regarded as the gate of hell. Look, too, at the opinions of men of letters. It would be easy to compile an anthology of passages in which very little reverence for women is shown.

Menander declared that "there are many monsters on land and in the sea, but the most horrible of all is woman", for sometimes she was gilded filth, and at other times the most charming of plagues. Simonides of Amorgos said that

"women are the greatest evil God ever made".—Corneille charged women with having "strange minds".—Gérard de Nerval tells us that woman is "an adorable monster, but certainly a monster".—La Fontaine, who had paid for his experience, wrote: "Women know how to lie. Even poor specimens are past masters at the trade." This author's fable *Les femmes et le secret* is known all over the world.—Rudyard Kipling remarks pithily, on the same theme: "For some inexplicable reason, woman is built in a way which makes it impossible for her to speak the truth, or even avow it to herself."—La Rochefoucauld is pitiless: "Most women's minds are more disposed to strengthen them in folly than in reason."—La Bruyère insists that the least we can say of women is that "they are extreme", being either better than men or much worse.—Chamfort affirms: "Women are made to hold commerce with our weakness, our folly, but not our reason."—Burns reproaches them with not foreseeing the consequences of what they do.—Are we to regard as praise or blame Carlyle's opinion that they are born hero-worshippers; and Thackeray's, that, by the light of nature, they are better able to hide their feelings than are "the most consummate of male courtiers"?—Victor Hugo, in *Le roi s'amuse* says that woman is a perfect devil. Saci thinks "it would be better to live with a lion and a dragon than with an ill-natured woman".—Then come the cautions of those who are distrustful, of men who have been wounded or have seen the wounds of their friends. Henry Murger calls women "living treasons". L. du Peschier, in his *Comédie des comédies*, writes that "everywhere woman brings misfortune, just as does war, sickness, and poverty". Paul Bourget sagely informs us that "a woman will use her utmost skill in bandaging your eyes, and will then blame you for stumbling". Schopenhauer, who is no doubt suspect as a misogynist, wrote: "Women remain children throughout life; they can only see things that are quite close; they cling to the present, mistake appearance for reality, and prefer

trifles to matters of real importance.”—To Hippel we owe an original simile: “Woman is a comma, man a full stop; with the latter you know where you are, but with the former you must go on reading.”—The wisdom of the nations has a word to say. Consider the English proverb, “Women, priests, and poultry never have enough”; or the French “Souvent femme varie, bien fol est qui s’y fie” (So fickle is woman that only a fool will trust her). Even their affectionate care for us earns a sarcasm: “How happy a woman is when the man she loves falls sick”, writes Etienne Rey, “at least he cannot escape, but must submit to be taken care of.”

There is justification, then, for the remark of Amiel, a Genevese and a timid moralist, that woman (whom he regarded as being either the saviour or the destroyer of the family) is man’s terror as well as his delight. Perhaps Ruskin saw still more clearly when he wrote: “Woman’s power is for rule, not for battle; and her intellect is not for invention or creation, but for sweet ordering, arrangement, and decision.” John Stuart Mill expressed much the same view, for he declared that woman was not an originator in the field of thought; and Dr. Wieth-Knudsen makes a similar point.—The reader may be left to draw his own conclusions as to the social results likely to follow from woman’s limitations in these respects.

Of course there have been many men willing to splinter a lance in defence of women. The question of their alleged inferiority was much discussed in the eighteenth century during the polemic known as the “Querelle des femmes” which can be looked upon as a remote prologue to the feminist movement of our own day. The fight was loyally waged, with the aid of erudite allusions after the manner of the times, some of the combatants affirming the superiority of one sex, and some that of the other. Neither side did much to persuade its adversaries. When we are bluntly asked, “Is woman, in fact, superior or inferior to man?” we shall do well to reply that the question is badly put.

Our ancestors were fond of discussions of the sort, and would debate with more rhetorical art than logic such problems as "Is poetry superior to prose? Sculpture to painting? Burgundy to claret?" Perhaps we reason better now, and are less inclined to hold competitive examinations and allot prizes. We elude the issue by "moving the previous question", as do parliamentarians who wish to shelve a debate. We say: "Every good thing has its desirable qualities, which are not on all fours with the desirable qualities of another equally good thing; and classifications do not change the things that are classified. Finally, a childish but honest and polite evasion can be found in the formula of the didactic and cautious Legouv  , who reminds us of the respect due to the sex "to which your mother belonged". This is a subterfuge, but an ingenious and restful one.

How should we answer the question, if we do not seek to evade it? By saying that the two sexes differ morally no less than physically. That, constitutionally, they have different ways of contemplating life. When they negotiate, it is as enemies who cannot possibly come to an understanding. They may collaborate, but they cannot enter into a true alliance. Their only genuine point of intersection is in the sexual act, when, by an exceptional and temporary union, they realise a fugitive understanding. Then misunderstanding begins anew.

The real explanation of woman's social inferiority is that, in good faith, man believes her to be his inferior. Yet he is wrong, for he confounds difference with inferiority. Herein he succumbs to a very natural inclination, which makes us all prone to look down upon what differs from ourselves. Woman makes exactly the same mistake, for we cannot doubt that she regards man as her inferior because he is different. Her respect for him, when she has any, is almost always tinged with fear, and vanishes when she no longer fears him. But we see how difficult it is for these inimical sexes to come to terms.

Favouring circumstances have helped man to establish his own social superiority upon his conviction that woman is mentally his inferior. He has kept in an inferior status her whom he believes to have been born in such a status. The very opposite ought to have happened, and perhaps will happen by a change of roles. It seems, indeed, to have happened in certain species, such as the bees. But pending such a biological change, sex antagonism will endure. Thus contemporary feminism seems to aim, more or less deliberately, at re-establishing sex equality by giving women an education, kinds of activity, a role, which are simply copied from those of men, when they would assuredly have done better to live their own lives and not to plagiarise their masters'.

To conclude, it is obvious that woman's influence is not determined by the condition of social inferiority which the community may impose on her. Cleopatra's nose, and many another more secret charm, will continue to change the aspect of the world. Far away from thrones, they have modified the social economy of more than one nation. To study the history of woman's influence on man while she was a slave and he her master, would be tantamount to writing the whole inner history of social evolution. It would reveal, too, the slave's revenge, and would convince us that we must not assign too much importance to the social façade when the omnipotence of sex appeal remains intact to modify the realities that lie behind.

*Comparison between the Sexual Activities of Man and of Woman.*—The inferior social position forced upon woman has contributed to the diffusion of the erroneous belief that the impetus to the sexual act comes invariably from the male.

Primarily, no doubt, this mistake is due to the physiological fact that in coitus man is the donor, woman the recipient. A woman, too, can participate in the sexual act many times, hundreds of times, in brief succession, remaining passively fit for it. But this has naught to do with the inten-

sity of unsatisfied desire, of that desire which is the criterion of sexual appetite. It is true that the position usually assumed by the male, and his movements during intercourse, are those of the more active member of the pair, whereas the female seems to await his advances, but this tells us nothing as to the intensity of desire in the partners, nor are the respective erotic attitudes always those described above. Moreover, the brutality with which some men take possession of a woman is but a reflex of the general tendency of a male who acts on the promptings of any kind of desire to achieve the conquest of life by brute force—his behaviour in the field of love being no more typical or instructive than his behaviour in many other fields.

The fact is that woman's sexual appetite is usually very strong. The Bedouins declare that her senses are as inflammable as touchwood. Bauer declares it indisputable "that women are always on the look-out for a man who will gratify their sexual desire". (*Wie bist du Weib*, p. 327.) And Norman Haire writes in *Hymen* (p. 41): "Every sexologist is aware that the normal woman has as vigorous a sex-appetite as the normal man, and it is just as frequent for married women to complain of their husband's inadequacy as of his sexual excess." How often do we hear, especially in divorce proceedings, of the "neglected wife". This is a mere euphemism for the fact that, having an undersexed, uninterested, or enfeebled husband, she does not receive adequate periodical satisfaction for her avid genital organs; in a word, it means that she has not found in marriage all the physical gratification which she believed herself to have every right to expect.

Sexual appetite arises very early in childhood. With few exceptions, little girls are sooner informed about the details of the sexual life than are little boys; are more ready than boys to take part in it, being inclined to tempt men's advances at an age when their brothers pay scant attention to women and are more prone to casual homo-sexual

encounters. In Vol. VI of these studies, the volume entitled *The State and Sexual Acts*, I shall have to return to this topic of the sexual precocity of girls. Speaking generally, the sexual appetite awakens earlier and subsides earlier in the human female than in the human male, and this gives us a valuable pointer for the sensible regulation of the sexual life.

The sexual history of women has much to say concerning the vigour of their appetites. We have all read of famous nymphomaniacs like Messalina and Catherine the Great, and have heard of contemporary women in whom sexual desire is almost as uncontrollable. But historical events throw many more men than women into the limelight, nor have so many women attained an outstanding artistic or literary reputation. For these reasons there are fewer detailed biographies of women, but this should not mislead us. Besides, we have ample information about the lives of noted courtesans, quite a number of whom became courtesans for the very reason that they were ardent and passionately desirous.

One who studies the available evidence will find that the fires of sex burn no less brightly in women than in men. The girls at the Convent of l'Abbaye-aux-Bois who wrote to the Grand Turk were typical of their sex. When we study women belonging to races in whom the natural promptings of sex are not stifled as they are apt to be among the inheritors of the Judeo-Christian tradition, we find that many of them incline to take the initiative in the sexual act—unless, of course, they are otherwise drilled because women are enslaved, and forwardness in a slave would be unseemly.

Montesquieu was told that in Guinea, "when a native woman meets a man she will seize him and threaten to denounce him to her husband if he rejects her advances. . . . Or she will slip into a man's bed, wake him up, and if he is backward will prepare to shout for help and charge him with attempted rape." The women of Central Nubia,



when their husbands are away, never lose a chance of sleeping with a stranger. Dr. Louis Frank, physician to the Bey of Tunis during the first half of the nineteenth century, found that the Jewesses of Tunis were ready for gallant adventures, but were careful to keep them from the knowledge of their husbands and of the rabbi lest they should be flogged or divorced. When the "Coquille" touched at the Carolines in 1874, the native women wanted to strip the bluejackets and study them in the nude. At Tahiti the cook of the "Bougainville" was knocked down and undressed by women inspired with like curiosity.

Consider these items from Mr. V. F. Calverton's paper *Are Women Monogamous?* read to the London Sexual Reform Congress (*Proceedings*, 1929, p. 50): "In New Ireland, Mr. Rannie observed, 'the woman just follows her own sweet will and lives with one man after another.' Among the natives of Victoria, P. Beveridge tells us the women have so many lovers that 'it is almost impossible to tell the true paternity of the children'. Among the Guaycurus and the Guanas, 'the women, more especially the nobler ones, have one or two lovers who are day and night at their side. . . .' The women of the Wadshagga have as many as ten husbands in a few years. In Arabia women of rank despise a marital connection with only one man and are open in the possession of many lovers. In Madagascar the upper-class woman demands the same privilege. (C. J. Sibree, *The Great African Island*.) In Sierra Leone, it is considered ill-bred of a woman to refuse the addresses of a lover."

Bruce, the famous African explorer, who had acquired the rudiments of medicine and surgery and travelled in the character of a doctor, relates that when he was attending the wives of the King of Sennar, they begged him to strip to the buff, for they wanted to see what he looked like. With the modesty of a true Scot, he declined to show them more than his chest and back. Here the skin was of a white

tint which the ladies found horrible. Dr. Guillemeau informs us that as late as the nineteenth century the Malay women of Patani were so enterprising that he had to buckle himself up tight, to elude their investigatory fingers. The present author must admit with regret that in the twentieth century he found them a little less forward, though still hospitable. Wherever local customs are not prohibitive, native women do not hide their sexual desire. Thus the worthy Schweinfurth was scandalised by the "obscenity" of the Mombuttu girls of Eastern Africa. As for the New Caledonians, Rochas says frankly: "I should need the pen of a Juvenal to do justice to the ways of these savage Messalinas in their dealings with a novice like myself."

The dictatorship of the anti-sexuals has not invariably prevented the women of the West from yielding to impulses and feelings no less imperious. The "scandalous chronicle" of the Courts enlightens us concerning woman's sexual appetite in modern times, and shows that our great ladies are at least a good second to the fair ones of African harems. Hamelin records the way in which the pretty women of Italy flung themselves into the arms of the victorious French generals who formed the train of Bonaparte after his culminating campaign of 1796. We are told that Madame Visconti, a famous beauty, wore a red fillet on which were embroidered, in diamonds, the words "Vive Bonaparte". Madame Ruga, still more ravishing, unmasked the battery of her smiles, sure that they would conquer the conqueror of Austria. But the Little Corsican was adamant. To show his contempt, he stood bolt upright behind Josephine's armchair, without deigning to say a word to any of the charmers. They had to resign themselves, and seek consolation elsewhere. "Visconti took Berthier, Ruga took Murat", writes Hamelin, adding an "etc.", which implies that none of the other men of Mars worshipped in vain at the shrine of Venus.

The normal young woman, then, has not had her nature

distorted by repression and the censorship; she is such as we see in societies which know little or nothing of these restraints, is apt for sexual pleasure, begins it very early, is not on the defensive, seeks it, and, if the men are backward, leads them on. That is what we see in women whose environment has not been falsified by the doctrine of renunciation. Their behaviour gives emphatic meaning to the formula about "living one's own life" which the women of the West, unbalanced by their torments, have recently begun to voice without fully understanding its significance.

Mrs. Ettie Hornibrook insists that sexual frigidity, which wrecks so many homes in the West, is unknown to the women of the East and of more primitive races. She is unquestionably right. Even in our own lands the sexual frigidity of women is rarely physiological. As every man with wide experience knows, there are very few women physically unfitted for intense sexual pleasure. Why do some women styled civilised suffer from this defect, from this impotence which is unknown to contemporary primitives and was unknown to the ancients? Because they have been psychologically corrupted by the atavism which has led to a disclaim for, a hatred of, sex and its manifestations. They have been rendered timid and backward by the anathemas they have, from youth upwards, heard unceasingly, by the railings against sexual pleasure uttered by parents, teachers, and priests. Repression holds triumphant sway, and makes it impossible for them to seek the joys which their more primitive sisters, who know nothing of the alleged "duty of renouncement", frankly desire. In days to come our descendants will be amazed that so long, by disseminating and accepting false doctrines, we overwhelmed ourselves with misfortune. The two conceptions of civilisation are irreconcilable.

If we strip off the artifices of what we are pleased to regard as civilisation, we find that woman is a bacchante matching the satyr, and that it is a mistake to suppose that

men are to the fore in the search for sexual pleasure. We must avoid allowing our sentiments, as regards woman in general, to slop over into sentimentality. Our mothers, of course, our sisters, our wives sometimes are "beyond reproach", are, that is to say, immune to the promptings of sex. We will take that for granted, put them in a glass case, and turn the key. But having thus made a concession to those who see things as fancy paints them and not as they really are, let us turn to consider, with no more humbug, the actual and not the conventional physiology of woman's love life.

We find it absurd to suppose that in sex matters man is always the hunter, woman always the hunted. Bernard Shaw's *Man and Superman* is a spirited protest against such a view. Judge Lindsey writes (*The Revolt of Modern Youth*, pp. 89-90): "At a meeting of parents which was recently held in Denver to discuss what could be done about the 'immorality' existing in a certain school the headmaster declared that the girls were largely responsible because they pursued the boys. One father who was present said of his son, who was accountable for the condition of a sixteen-year old girl in the same school, 'I don't know what I can do about his conduct. I have forbidden him to go out at night, but I can't always watch him (*sic*)! Every evening the girls come around outside the house and whistle for him.' A high-school boy, in confessing to me his experience with a certain girl, said, 'I didn't go after her. She used to stop her automobile in the street and ask me to take a ride. I felt like a fool if I said I wouldn't go with her.'" Fielding, when he wrote *Joseph Andrews* as a witty counterblast to Richardson's *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*, was but voicing the general view that Potiphar's wife was rather unlucky in setting her cap at a strait-laced nincompoop like Joseph. But the traditional error has been, as regards relations between the sexes, to suppose that when a woman "gets into trouble" it has always been the man who played

the part of "infamous seducer" while the woman has invariably been the "victim". This is far from being the truth in most cases.

A judge must wear blinkers if he supposes that man is always the seducer. We are living in a transition period. Woman is no longer a slave, a chattel, a piece of transferable property; but she does not yet enjoy social and economic freedom comparable to that of the male. However, we must be careful to avoid granting unrestricted privileges which will reverse the roles, and establish an inequality of the opposite kind. Woman's "weakness" has vanished with the slavery of yesteryear. Though not yet fully enfranchised, woman is really stronger than man. Much stronger, for her usual weapons are reinforced by the tradition that she is disarmed. In such countries as the U.S.A. there is much confusion upon this topic, intensified by woman as the interested party who encourages the belief that man uses the whole social apparatus to crush her.

A comparison between the sexual activities of man and of woman thus shows them to have kindred appetites, desires equally intense, the same eager quest, and a longing for victory which in both sexes has identical imperiousness alike in its efforts and its successes. It will be impossible to reconstruct sexual ethics unless we take into account the fact that men and women share this overwhelming urge towards sexual enjoyment. One who ignores this will necessarily sacrifice a just balance to specious appearances or to a stubborn determination to be guided by stereotyped opinions.

But, having admitted that there is a fundamental equality between the combatants in the battle of the sexes, we have to admit something of no less moment, that in one respect, at least, man has an enormous advantage over woman.

Woman ages much sooner. Much earlier in life she loses her freshness, her charm, and begins to look withered or over-ripe. She ceases to be an object of desire. In hot

climates it is even worse than here; for though the girls of the south and the tropics are ready for love far earlier than our northern maidens, the bloom of youth is cruelly transient. That is why it is absurd to make the "age of consent" the same in every land and under all skies. But the tendency for age to wither women is racial as well as climatic. Jewesses in Europe fade more quickly than their western sisters. In the Far East a woman of twenty-five begins to speak of herself as old, not from affectation, not as one fishing for compliments, but because she really feels old. Among the Egyptian peasantry, among the fellahin, a girl is marriageable at twelve, and at twenty-five begins to look like a crone. "After thirty, childbirth becomes a danger, and the infant is seldom viable." In Europe, until recently, a woman was ready to lay down her arms at thirty; now she carries on bravely till sixty, though the ravages of time often mock her endeavours. One of our biggest mistakes in the latter-day sexual policy of the West has been to defer more and more the period of sexual activity, for it is regarded as normal (in certain countries) that intercourse should not be permissible till a woman is eighteen or twenty, and marriage is often deferred till as late as twenty-five. In Vol. VI of these studies, which will deal with *The State and Sexual Acts*, I shall hope to show that this postponement is based on a complete misunderstanding both of psychology and of physiology. Here I shall merely give an outline of its effects upon sex relations.

A man does not grow old as quickly as a woman, so that a "well-preserved" man of fifty looks younger than a "well-preserved" woman of forty. Besides, the bodily qualities that attract the other sex are not the same in the man as in the woman. A man does not appeal to a woman mainly because he has a fresh complexion, regular features, glossy hair, a good figure; and therefore the loss of these qualities with advancing years will not make him repulsive. This is how matters work out in practice: a man of twenty-five

marries a woman of twenty; two decades later, the man is forty-five, the woman forty. This means that the woman is finished; whereas the man, though already middle-aged so far as the calendar goes, will still be pleasing to young girls, intercourse with whom will renew his sexual vigour and whose desires he will be able to satisfy, although a woman of forty has no sex appeal for adolescent males. That is why no one is shocked to see an elderly man with a young wife, but a marriage in which the wife is fifteen or twenty years older than the husband seems an outrage. In the East, however, women do not make nearly so much fuss about growing old. A girl, there, accepts her physiological fate without repining, because she has never expected anything better. If husband and wife are of the same age, sexual incompatibility begins even sooner. When (as is now not infrequent) a man marries a woman considerably older than himself, the union will infallibly prove a disaster. For these reasons, the battle of the sexes is not waged on equal terms, women being heavily handicapped. Those who fail to recognise as much, fly in the face of the facts. Such is the outcome of our present sexual policy.

Here in the West woman is often the victim of that policy, clinging as she does to a fictive monogamy which recoils upon her. Playing a game of all or nothing, she often wins—nothing. Being by temperament more nervous than man, she does not easily resign herself to the early loss of the pleasure of love, its excitement and its passion. She more easily accepts this defeat at twenty-five, as in the East, than at thirty or thirty-five, as in the West. The western woman, more of a “sticker” than the Oriental, goes on fighting to keep her place in the sun. She does a great deal to keep it, and often succeeds more or less by physical methods which, though they do not prevent her ageing sooner than a man, will soften and postpone the obvious decline. In the East a woman accepts the inevitable, retiring gracefully before she is kicked downstairs; she is not surprised that

her husband wants another wife or a concubine much younger and more attractive than herself, and helps to get him what he desires—thus wisely contributing to the peace of the household.

The aforesaid physiological disadvantage of women serves partly to explain why many western women favour indissoluble marriage. Some declare, indeed, that a free union gives them a better chance of avoiding the production of satiety in the male; but others rely upon wedlock, upon stipulations nominated in the bond, fortified by which they regard their position as impregnable, and are prepared to endure outrage and contumely for the sake of pecuniary interest. Which plan is preferred, is a matter of temperament, each woman being guided by her own. All this, however, is outside the domain of rationalist legitimacy and sexual freedom.

Nature's vagaries must be respected. Since nature makes a woman age sooner than a man, turning her into a crone when her partner is still robust and able to exert sex appeal, those who would join "till death them do part" a man and a woman who are approximately of the same age by the calendar defy the laws of the sexual life. A husband whose wife is withered has no zest for the sexual act, and if he continues to perform it does so by a merely mechanical routine. Deprived of the incomparable stimulus of youth in his mate, he grows torpid and melancholy, himself ages, takes no more interest in life, because his sexual hopes have foundered. Such is the sad fate of all the worthy, well-tamed and well-behaved cits whom, on Sundays and holidays, one can see taking their obese and unappetising "better halves" for a walk on the Mall in any European city. They do their best to find a derivative at the club, in gambling, sport, or political meetings.

Much needless sorrow would have been avoided if people had learned to reckon with the different consequences of advancing years in men and in women. Woman ought not



to be for man a collaborator of much the same age as himself, growing old beside of but in advance of him, never renewed but for that very reason outstripping him on the downward path, as dull as a horizon too restricted, a perpetual source of distressing memories (which are always more tenacious than agreeable ones), an accomplice of time's defacing fingers. To be all these things is to be no longer woman: a radiant girl, ever desirable because ever fresh, a source of unceasing new joys, not sunset but sunrise.

## CHAPTER VII

### SEX RELATIONS

Phryne's Bosom.—Feminism.—Misogyny and Philogyny.

*Phryne's Bosom.*—Ignorant or clumsy indeed must be those who want to regulate the relations between the sexes without, first, foremost, and all the time, allowing for the intimate nature of each. When we have ascertained that woman's value is largely determined by the fact that she has certain sexual characters primary and secondary (without prejudice to her other valuable characteristics); that this is the main thing which gives her a market value in human society; that man recognises it and always takes it into account in his relations with women; that she herself admits as much, adapts herself to the fact, and profits by it—are we to become indignant because these things are so, and must be so? Shall we not waste our time if we try to kick against the pricks, or pay heed to the declamations or the objurgations or the ten commandments of those who rail against the nature of things? What, to the great detriment of the human race, prohibitionists fail to understand is that they ought to accommodate themselves to the realities of sex and turn them to the general advantage, instead of challenging their right to exist and trying to alter the inalterable. This is a kindred mistake to that of those who would like carnivora to be herbivora, or wish that tortoises had wings. A rationalist's business is to observe the data of sex, make good use of them as they are, and not pull a wry face when he contemplates them. As soon as governments, giving short shrift to the preachers of false doctrines, accept the foregoing principle, they will cease running their heads against a stone wall and will accommodate themselves to circumstances.

Instead of becoming enraged because, by nature, women (like men) have certain merits and certain defects, and display the respective consequences of these, we should desist from futile rebellion and admit that the facts are in many ways extremely agreeable.

Hitherto we have not made the best use of the human material at our disposal. We waste our opportunities and undervalue the human species. In war-time, for example, we see the French nation, hoodwinked by the fallacy that one man is as good as another, and in obedience to the vociferations of those whose envy of their betters leads them to regard it as true, send to certain death a hundred pupils of the Higher Normal School (which is the nursery of the coming philosophers, doctors, engineers, and inventors of the nation) with the same unconcern as it sends a hundred grocers' assistants or a hundred journeymen butchers. This is folly, for the first hundred are irreplaceable, whereas the second hundred, most worthy persons though they be, are stock types and can be supplied by the myriad. What manufacturer is so foolish as to make no difference between ordinary wares and choice ones? But the State prides itself on this folly, with its parade of equal treatment.

We make the same sort of mistake as regards women, giving them their place in society without an eye to their market value. We do not pick and choose, for our absurd laws leave the selection to chance. I am reminded of what I saw in Tongking, where a great many women do hard manual labour. Among them were graceful girls whose charms could not be hidden from the connoisseur by dust and dirt, mud and sweat, patched and untidy garments, as they wheeled push-carts, carried heavy burdens through the streets, or tilled the soil. The Tongkingese authorities made no bones about letting them toil at exhausting tasks which would soon render them misshapen and prematurely worn out. But suppose we had a civilisation which knew how to prize physical beauty, these treasures would be

valued as they deserve. Cleaned up, properly decked, given light and appropriate occupations, they might minister abundantly to the beauty, welfare, and happiness of the race. They might be cared for as mothers of a fine breed, becoming pleasing companions of privileged men, dancers, mandolin-players, or what not. There would be a place for them in all these roles in a society acknowledging the legitimacy of sexual acts. Surely this would be more intelligent than to make Pegasus haul a cart laden with bricks and have him thrashed by a blind wagoner?

A pretty woman is a luxury, the most precious of all luxuries. Maurice Prax writes: "A woman of the people—if she pleases, has beauty or grace, is famous as an actress or a film star or a tennis champion—ranks with a duchess or a princess, or a maharanee or a queen. . . . Her birth is of no moment. Her figure, her smile, her eyes, her teeth, her elegance, are enough to make her an aristocrat. Naturally, instinctively, tranquilly, she takes a leading position in any world, is everywhere in place; she is adulated, petted, admired. Not long ago, when Alfonso XIII and his consort gave a royal reception to the ambassadors at the Barcelona Exhibition, mannequins from Paris defiled before the king, the queen, the princes and princesses of the blood, the grandees of Spain. These pretty girls from Montmartre, from Ménilmontant, from Belleville; from Cahors, Tours, Lille; from some remote corner in the French countryside—were themselves made princesses by the roses in their cheeks, the brightness of their eyes, the grace and suppleness and splendour of their carriage. In this aristocratic assembly, they seemed, they were, altogether in their place, for they were art come to life, animated charm, the embodiments of pleasure. It is right that such lithe creatures should be surrounded by refinements, choice objects, harmonious shades, iridescent fabrics, sumptuous colour-tones."

An artistic treasure will be framed in a beautifully furnished drawing-room or in a fine museum; but the world

should be the frame of a pretty woman, a world arranged in such a way as to set off her beauties as they deserve. The kind of pleasure she will give does not matter, since all such pleasures are equally legitimate. But what a blunder it is; when, owing to the stupidity of anti-sexual proscriptions, the crudity of our social classifications, and the ineptitude of our laws, the woman who is fulfilling her important and valuable role of providing joy, should be hounded, persecuted, deprived of her proper frame, vilified, despised. Until mankind learns how to safeguard her interests she will remain in this grievous case, without hope of adequate reward.

All the more when we agree that it is needful to make some distinction between women whose destiny it is to become mothers, and women whose main business it is to give joy, we must recognise that no society can be happy if it lacks seductive women. A man who is ugly and ill is an ugly invalid, no more. A woman in the same sad case is a caricature of womanhood. Apart from her physical charms, a woman may have many moral and intellectual merits; but her supreme merit is beauty, and we should give her all possible advantages in the way of training, protection, adornments, experience, and funds to enable her to develop her beauty to the full during the brief years that precede its inevitable decline.

A rational system of child-bearing and child-rearing, in which the mother will not have too much to do apart from this role and will not be prematurely aged by too rapid a succession of pregnancies, is, as we shall learn, essential. The feminist movement can contribute its quota to the foundations of such a system, provided the feminists do not forget that one of woman's most important qualities is that she should please, should be seductive, and should be thus fitted to promote the full flowering of sexual delight, and become a luxury as well as a necessity. Modern woman—a free member of a free society and liberated from unnatural

taboos—should unite the grace and wit which made the courtesans of old so fascinating, to the independence which is a ripe fruit of modern individualism and the intelligence which comes from a good understanding of life.

Pretty, charming, seductive women are important constituents of the national wealth. As such they ought to be environed by tenderness, admiration, caresses; to be guaranteed ample leisure; and to be freed from any anxiety as to what will befall them when age arrives. They should be treated with the utmost indulgence, for their flesh is their virtue, and beauty is itself a virtue. Valid for all time is the moral of the story of Phryne. On a capital charge, she was defended by her lover Hyperides. When he failed to move the judges by his oratory, he bade her uncover her bosom, and thus he secured her acquittal. "Will you send that down to death?" she seemed to ask. "Are you ruthless enough to suppress so much beauty and so much possibility for joy?" The unspoken plea, more eloquent than words, swayed the Areopagus.

"Phryne's bosom" rules the world. A man is always ready to concede equal rights to a beautiful woman, though she belong to a much lower class than himself. King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid! The man unhesitatingly accepts the woman as a member of his own circle. She is instantly placed on a level where she can treat with monarchs. Nay more, she can dominate them, can subjugate them, because she captivates them. Though but a shepherdess (old style) or a shorthand-typist (new style), she can in a trice become a great lady. Indubitably it is in the relations between men and women that we find the most spontaneous manifestations of democratic equality; but this is a one-sided affair, for the palace doors are usually slammed in the face of a mere man of no account who tries to force an entry into the presence of the prince or other magnate who will unhesitatingly admit the same poor man's pretty sister. This

shows that the privilege is, for obvious reasons, reserved for members of the fair sex.

Woman, too, is aristocratic by temperament, whatever her station. She does not wish fortunes to be divided up or luxury to be abolished, since she always hopes to become one of fortune's favourites. There are few exceptions to this rule. Whereas the man of low degree who makes his livelihood by the sweat of his brow looks forward to a revolution which will make all men workers like himself and will drag everyone down to his own level, the woman of the same class can make her own revolution by rising into a sphere from which she looks down upon the less fortunate. *Equality* in sexual pleasure inclines man to *fraternity* in caresses, and makes him ready to provide his female companion with the *liberty* which is the salt of life. These three elements of the revolutionary slogan, often proclaimed by man but rarely practised so far as his own sex is concerned, were realised for herself long ago by woman, who did not wait till 1789. The Jews have been described as "the oldest aristocracy in the world", but Maurice Prax justly points out that the term is far more applicable to women. Why should this surprise us, since the essence of aristocracy is delicacy, finesse, subtlety, elegance—all that is so obvious in woman and so rarely seen in the male? That, no doubt, is why women on whom hard or rough manual labour is imposed (like the Tongkingese about whom I was writing a few pages back), always look as uneasy as a fish out of water. It has been well said: "A woman is no more fitted by nature for muscular toil than a greyhound for drawing a plough." Many men, men of mark, recognise the truth of this by their readiness to provide women with an easy time in return for a few graceful movements and an agreeable whiff of the odor feminae.

Men are apt to exhibit a certain amount of voluntary and amiable masochism in their relations with women. This is part of our general idea of sex relations, and perhaps

results from man's recognition that woman is a "weaker vessel". A man will merely smile when a woman rails at him or strikes him, though for a tenth of such words or blows from one of his own sex he would answer with violence and perhaps kill the offender. If a woman attacks him in this way, he does not feel degraded, even though she leaves her marks on him; he regards her indulgently, as he would regard a domestic cat which should lose its temper and scratch him. What is it but masochism, this temporary renunciation of the use of his superior strength—a pleasurable renunciation? Masochistic, too, are the polite conventions which regulate a man's behaviour towards a woman. When he kisses her hand, it is a sign of servitude; and his refusal to allow her to fetch and carry for herself has a similar signification. Think, too, of the enthusiastic abdications of masculine superiority on the part of a man who is very much in love, and makes it a point of honour to accept all his lady-love's caprices, to have no other will than hers.

In domestic differences, trivial or grave, a woman can always strengthen her case by the tacit appeal to "Phryne's bosom". She starts with this in her favour. Even though a man may pass an unfavourable judgment on a woman who, in the struggle for existence, counts too much upon her bodily charms, he will nevertheless agree that for her they are both capital and interest, wealth which only a fool could expect her to leave unutilised, or that she should bestow it gratuitously without asking any return.

Nevertheless, the working of "Phryne's bosom" is capricious and untrustworthy. Every man has his own sexual preferences and peculiarities, his own fetishisms. So has every woman hers. Sexologists have made an exhaustive study of these and their remote origins. What interests us here is the fact that multifarious tastes enable each one of us, male or female, to find opportunities for sexual enjoyment. To put it vulgarly, a man will almost always



be able to find a pair of boots that will be a good fit. The reasons for choice are fundamentally subjective. A man may feel that, for him, there is no sex appeal in a woman almost universally proclaimed beautiful, and may fall for a woman whom others regard as ugly.

This fact may mean much to women who are generally described as ill-favoured. When we talk of "Phryne's bosom" we by no means wish to imply that a woman cannot be alluring unless she comes up to the classical standard of beauty. A homely woman is seldom altogether homely, and the same remark applies to men. I am not thinking of qualities of heart and brain which are said to be able to make a man forget that a woman is ugly—as the well-intentioned, in their wish to give consolation (and attest the goodness of God), so often insist. The fact is that sex appeal is exerted by the body as well as by the face, and a woman with an extremely plain countenance may have a most attractive figure. Also experience teaches that one with a homely face or a poor figure may, if young, intelligent, and ardent, display when it comes to the point most agreeable sexual qualities and a remarkably subtle art of love. A man makes a mistake if he thinks only of a pretty face or a handsome figure. Many women whose appearance is mediocre can surprise us by the vigour and charm of their amatory life. Some men, indeed, prefer women who are outwardly unattractive, believing (often without warrant) that this will ensure constancy on the part of their lady-loves. Others agree with Anatole France that "a beautiful woman who plays us false is more troublesome than a homely one—and with a homely one we may always have pleasant surprises". Many "great lovers" are even more subtle. It has been said that the epicure in women knows how to appreciate some who would usually be described as unattractive, just as the epicure in food values "high" game or "strong" cheese. In the *Ars amatoria* Ovid wrote: "Girls should learn to sing; many have found in the voice

compensation for defects of figure." But the most effective compensation will certainly be discovered in a skilful use of the more intimate sexual aptitudes. Connoisseurs are well aware of this. One should never pass over a "plain" woman without having explored her sexual possibilities. I have known men who made a point of courting women whom others neglected, and declared that thus, finding unexpected amorous delights, they enhanced the pleasure of sexual dalliance. This should teach "homely" women self-esteem, should encourage them not to throw the handle after the hatchet by definitively accepting the belief that they are unattractive. Self-confidence may do much to help them in securing a juster share of the advantages of sex. Many would gain by the chance of showing themselves (like the lady in the fairy-tale) nude but wearing a mask.

These considerations should be most consolatory to women. We shall see in Vol. IV of these studies (*A Rational Sexual Policy*) that intelligent sexual comradeship and a wisely ordered education will enable a "plain" woman to enjoy the advantages of sexual companionship, whereas in former days she had no chance of turning her hidden treasures to account. Sexual freedom will unquestionably bring compensation here. Of course it must not be supposed that all women are alike to a man, provided only that they have the grace of youth. For each man there is a special type of woman which he finds peculiarly attractive, and any particular specimen will allure him in proportion as she approaches that type. On the other hand there are certainly women whose aspect or manner is such as to extinguish the possibility of desire. Apart from these extreme cases, however, it may be said that every woman whom the touch of time has not yet marred and with whom a man has not yet been intimate offers so many unexplored possibilities both of body and of mind that every man who is capable of being an ardent lover and who is not unduly fastidious can be sure of finding in her something to repay

him for his curiosity, his efforts, his embrace. *Mutatis mutandis*, the same is equally true of man from the woman's standpoint.

The reader will not fail to note that "Phryne's bosom", superadded to the intrinsic value of any and every woman, makes the realisation of feminist claims to equality exceedingly difficult. It is an appeal to partiality of the worst kind, since the partiality will be unconscious. In business, a woman employee starts with certain advantages which her male competitor does not possess. Her chief knows that she is a potential mistress, and here the male employee does not have a look-in. On the other hand, when an enterprise is run by women, the manageress or the inspectress will never forgive a subordinate who is more beautiful and more attractive than herself. Consider the case of a woman barrister. Her charm may make a mere male bungle his case. "Phryne's bosom", here, must be entered on the debit side of the account.

*Feminism.*—During the last fifty years feminism has made so much noise in the world that volumes could be written on its history, its victories, its programme, and its hopes. That is outside my scope, but it will be proper to study here what bearing the feminist movement has had on the theory and practice of sexual ethics, if only to state a few questions to which the answers are important. The remarkable fact is that integral feminism, regarded by many as the dawn of a new era, is not definitive nor even progressive.

The far-reaching physiological differences between woman and man are so axiomatic that they were hardly worth mentioning in former days. But the position has changed now, when integral feminists propose to ignore these differences, and, repudiating consideration of the question whether they may not induce differences of character and necessitate differences of function, to leave them out of account when formulating women's claims. Evident though they are, the physiological differences cannot be "taken as

read" without discussion when large sections of the population blandly deny them. Physiological inequality is no longer a truism, but has become an argument, an objection. Or, if you like, it is a most valuable premise in controversy with those whose main object in life is to insist upon and enforce sexual equality. The discussion of the matter becomes imperative in view of much that I wrote in the preceding chapter.

Hard facts reveal the limitations imposed by these physiological differences. At the Olympic Games of 1929, when an 800 metres flat race was for the first time opened to women, there was such a distressing spectacle of breathless and exhausted competitors falling in a dead faint that the managers declared themselves strongly opposed to a renewal of the experiment—which may be considered symbolical of the blunders of those who try to demonstrate that "one sex is as good as another". One who fails to recognise obvious limitations, bodily and mental, must be as blind as a bat. Equality? Before that can be established, women must get themselves new bodies, since to cut their hair short does not suffice. We will resume our talk on equality when men are able to bear children and women to . . . But I will leave the completion of that sentence to the reader's taste and imagination.

Much of the advocacy of feminism is based upon this disregard of the obvious. That is why so many women take no interest in "their own movement", and why so many thoughtful men regard it with aversion. Consider the weighty utterance of Dr. Wieth-Knudsen (op. cit.): "Modern feminism is the outcome of an artificial agitation, one of the numerous straggling shoots of the liberal movement which has dominated the intellectual life of Europe for more than a century. In part it is nourished by certain ladies who are unquestionably talented writers."

We must try to clear up the matter by a study of primary data. Feminists are never weary of telling us that woman's

intellect is as good as man's. Who doubts it? There are women doctors, lawyers, chemists. Women can pass difficult examinations with flying colours, and engage successfully in careers which demand the effective use of a well-stored and highly trained mind. They can apply the powers of a quick brain, a dependable memory, and an alert understanding to everything which, in the contemporary world, is part of our common heritage. Many of them, therefore, become the highly esteemed collaborators or assistants of men. But what we have to ask is whether these manifestations of thought are necessarily accompanied by manifestations of feeling identical with those of men and competent to produce similar reactions. There is no warrant for any such assumption. Even when we confine our observation to a number of men equipped with equal intellectual powers, we find that some of them fail through defects of sensibility. How, then, can we expect that a woman, whose affective responses spring from a biological nature which is fundamentally different, will, when we pass out of the purely intellectual domain into that of social activities, behave exactly like a man? This is where "integral feminism" ceases to be truly integral, and where its advocacy is likely to lead to grave flaws in human organisation. But no harm will arise if we frankly recognise the differences that indubitably exist, and (both men and women fully aware that there is nothing dishonourable about natural differentiations) draw the necessary inferences regarding the right utilisation of woman's activities in social life.

It is here that feminists so often go astray, missing the point in a way characteristic of their sex. Gustave Le Bon justly remarks that conduct issues, not from the intelligence, but from the character. Well now, as compared with men, women show a kind of judgment, a sense of responsibility, a feeling for what really matters, a conception of measure, an idea of neutrality, which are, I will not say inferior (for who can decide the grades in such a classification?) but

utterly different. Placed, therefore, in the same political, moral, or economic circumstances as men, and having to collaborate with men in, let us say, the administration of justice, they react differently. They react with a feminine temperament, as men react with a masculine one. What else can you expect? Dog and cat seldom react in the same way, and probably each of them despises the reactions of the other. How absurd, then, to suppose that we can construct a society in which men and women will play "equal" parts.

Typical of these feminine reactions are some which deserve close study. Women seldom share men's disinterested conception of justice. Their decisions are unduly coloured by feeling, and this may lead either to excessive levity or to excessive severity. Miss J. N., the only woman police magistrate in the State of New York, had to be cashiered after the report of an investigator appointed to study charges of corruption which had been brought against the magistracy. The lady had been appointed in the hope that her dealings with street-walkers would be more humane as well as more thorough and efficacious than those of her male colleagues. But where the latter had chastised with whips, she chastised with scorpions. Mr. Seabury reported "Miss J. N. is unfitted for her position because of her harshness and injustice to the offenders brought before her, and her persistent disregard of the rights of the accused in the Women's Court." The State of New York found it necessary to liberate 51 out of 67 girls between the ages of 15 and 21 who had been sent to the house of correction as "vicious minors". This is worth careful meditation as an instance of how disastrous can be the use made of the puritan code by a puritanical woman entrusted with the life and liberty of courtesans.

Another quotation from Wieth-Knudsen will be appropriate: "The essential fact is that an innate sense of justice and truth is far less powerful in women than in men. Not

for a moment do I wish to imply that men are always just and women always unjust. I know that there are many unjust men, and many women who earnestly aspire to be just. But it is a fact that an unjust man is almost always aware of the distinction between justice and injustice; and that if he does wrong it is by mischance or under pressure of necessity. A woman, on the other hand, will be unjust ignorantly and innocently, because her faculty of distinguishing between good and evil is undeveloped. She judges persons and things from a personal standpoint, influenced almost exclusively by her feelings. Rarely can she rise to what we men regard as an objective and purely pragmatic way of contemplating her environment." This was also Schopenhauer's view.

As the instance just quoted shows, those who have been subjected to the tender mercies of women magistrates and police officers are far from inclined to acclaim this feminist conquest as an advance in civilisation.

In the Middle Ages the law courts held that the testimony of two women was needed to counterbalance that of one man; and the ancients, who knew more about women than we do, hesitated to accept their evidence at all. Every judge knows how much more often women bear false witness than men. Many a modern miscarriage of justice has been due to the fact of our having forgotten what our forefathers knew, that a woman's word is worth less than a man's. This is no mere misogynist calumny. Many women will unhesitatingly agree, saying that such is the nature of things. Recently Adela Rogers St. John, an American woman of letters, began as follows an essay on *Men that Women like best*: "In nine cases out of ten you can easily guess why this or that woman likes men. The reason is that men are less 'artful'; they run straight, and have done so for centuries. Can you say the same of women? My father was a famous lawyer, who had had to deal with women of all sorts and sizes on the witness-stand. He used to say that where a man

was concerned it was impossible for a woman to speak the truth."

Let us, henceforward, profit by the recognition that neither sex can be regarded as superior to the other. If we agree that there are manifest differences between them, we can turn these differences to account. Men and women alike have peculiar merits and peculiar defects. They can supplement one another, but cannot take one another's place. When we try to make them do this, we get ludicrous or deplorable results—as at the Olympic Games.

We must class a man's doings with those of other men, a woman's with those of other women. Specimens who try to escape from the classification are fish out of water. That is why the spontaneous frankness of popular speech has long since decided that an unduly masculine woman is a "virago", and an effeminate man a "softy" or a "sissy". Exceptional cases, like that of Catherine of Russia and those of do-nothing kings, serve only to prove the rule. It remains impossible to confound the sexes. The woman who, defying her nature, plays the man, seems to us a usurper, and she has to pay the penalty. Only by unceasing effort can she avoid slipping back into her normal sphere, which she has left in defiance of her instincts, and at the price of happiness. She is never easy in a life which she vainly tries to make like a man's, and in which she is as awkward as people invariably are in borrowed plumage. Just as a woman wearing man's garb looks uncomfortable or grotesque, so does she when the travesty is purely moral. "Alike physically and mentally you were designed for passivity, and you make a great mistake when you strive for activity." (G. Groslier, *Le retour à l'argile*.)

The basic error of feminism is its denial of this natural classification. Its ideal, founded upon a chimerical notion of complete equality, seems to be the aping of man by woman. So true is this that the "new women" are apt to renounce feminine dress, to adopt masculine attitudes as



well as male garments, and (as far as the indiscretions of their anatomical structure will permit) to look like men. These absurdities compromise the good side of feminist claims.

The upshot is that such women reject occupations peculiarly suited to the feminine constitution, instead of being satisfied to improve the condition of these; and they compete with men in careers which long experience has shown to be unsuitable. I do not deny that a fair number of women make a pretty good job of such careers, for there are exceptions to every rule. But we can hardly suppose that competition of this sort will redound to the general advantage. In such occupations women will suffer from a clash between their congenital merits and defects, and the necessities of the occupation. Although they try to act like men, they feel like women, and the realities of the work press the facts home. Beneath the lawyer's or the doctor's gown, there is room for "Phryne's bosom"—as client or patient, judge or professor, will not fail to remember. Nor will the female competitor herself ever forget, for to forget she would have to cease being a woman. When a pretty woman, coquette by nature, skilled in making use of her sex appeal, follows a masculine occupation, "Phryne's bosom" gives her unfair advantage over her male rivals. An advantage to which she is entitled in the struggle for existence. Perhaps? But it inevitably leads to ill-feeling which renders the battle of the sexes more dangerous and more brutal.

Now that, in conformity with the doctrine of equality, the entry of women into masculine professions has become a matter of course, and is no longer quaint and exceptional as it was to begin with, now that it has become a methodical invasion, there has been a change in the masculine attitude. Since it has become part of the struggle for life, of the struggle whose guiding principle is "everyone for himself (or herself) and the devil take the hindmost", men have riposted in the masculine way—brutally. Concurrently women have grown discouraged, for they never expected

such savagery. Writing in 1928, a woman remarks: "Valiant women who have been trying to fight like men declare themselves to be, not only tired, but profoundly disheartened (though not actually overwhelmed) by the shocks they have sustained. . . . At first men were actively hostile to women's emancipation. Then they became reconciled to the idea, and courteously welcomed women into domains hitherto reserved for themselves. Of late there has been a change. We can detect a masculine sense of exasperation, tinged with unconscious jealousy or even with a crude dread of competition. Hence men are no longer perfectly fair to the women who are considered to be encroaching." In a word, they no longer show what used to be called the gallantry of the male.

The reason is not far to seek. If women push their way into men's preserves, and wish to behave "like men", to work "like men", they will inevitably be treated "like men". They cannot eat their cake and have it. When reminded of the fact, they insist that, somehow or other, the machine must have got out of gear.

Women make a great mistake when they try to be like men, and they would do much better by specialising along lines indicated by their sex. Nature having proclaimed that there can be no such thing as complete physiological equality between the sexes, a sensible woman will add on her own account that there can be no complete social equality either. The search for either kind of equality is chimerical, and no reasonable feminist who is fully aware of her own interest and that of her sex will engage upon any such wild-goose chase. The proper aim of feminism is the enfranchisement of woman in so far as her person, her activities, and her morals are still subjected to the control of man. This is a natural and justifiable claim, which does not entail the incoherences and disappointments that result from the demand for integral equality.

When a feminist says, "A woman is not so free as a man,

but she ought to be", the claim is reasonable and right. Though much inequality between the sexes is the work of nature, it is certainly no part of nature's plan that a woman should be a man's servant or slave. The idea of equal freedom, equal rights, as between man and woman had already entered the mind of Aristotle, though he would have laughed at the mare's nest of unconditional equality. Freedom will bring such equality as is realisable. Freedom is always fruitful. In woman's case, freedom will create and foster all the equality which she can reasonably claim. To cut her hair short (her long hair which Schopenhauer mockingly declared to be the counterpart of the shortness of her ideas) is not a sign of equality, though it may be a legitimate protest in societies which childishly cling to long hair for women as a badge of subjection. In the Chinese Revolution the southern nationalists, regarding women who had cut their hair as at war with traditional principles, had them ruthlessly shot. The intervention of the rifle in this matter shows that an action futile in itself may have real value as a defiant assertion of renouncement of tradition. The fact is, however, that modern woman makes a big mistake when she fights for an unattainable equality, but is right when she struggles for freedom. She will need all her strength for that campaign, which (unlike the struggle for equality) can bear practical fruit. She was a slave yesterday; to-day she has broken her chains. Is not that enough, without crying for the moon?

When integral feminism, obsessed by the idea of equality, sets forth upon the vain attempt to realise it, the movement lapses into intolerable exaggerations which seriously weaken the feminist case. That is what always happens to those who overestimate their strength. Let me point out a few feminist errors.

In her fits of spleen, woman will not grant others the freedom she desires for herself. That is why she becomes a fanatical prohibitionist. Unaccustomed to liberty, she,

in the article of claiming it, denies it to others, thinking it dangerous. Hence women leaders of the feminist movement advocate all sorts of restrictions, and their programme is a long list of interferences with private life. Women lack the respect for freedom which men have been hard put to it to acquire. Feminist leagues make our gorge rise by their prohibitionist spirit and their puritan trend. In sexual matters, above all, woman seems determined to impose restrictions. One who has adopted a scheme of sexual behaviour, wishes intolerantly to force it upon the whole world, and is ready to persecute those who will not comply. When feminists speak of "immorality", they seem to mean simply and solely an unwillingness to accept without discussion a particular group of sexual conventions. Thus the most deadly enemies of sexual freedom are women of average mental calibre who are incapable of appreciating any other canons than those which were taught them in childhood, and who cling to their conventional past as a shipwrecked seaman clings to a floating plank. This explains the ferocious attitude of "purity societies" towards courtesans, who are, if possible, to be totally abolished. The upshot is that persons who are devoted to the cause of freedom are inclined to believe that the triumph of feminism will lead to inveterate prohibitionism under the control of narrow-minded busy-bodies. In this matter feminists, ignorant of the nature of genuine freedom, make a grave error of tactics which alienates many who would otherwise become sympathisers.

Conversely, women to whom long and bitter experience has given a slave mentality, tend to extremes when enfranchised. For the very reason that man, the master, exploited the sex of woman, the slave, she now inclines, in many cases, to deny him sexual indulgence. Forgetful of the teachings, ignoring the promptings, of nature, such women declare they will have nothing to do with men. Childish in their rancour, they go on strike against their own sex organs.

In their fury at having for so long been treated by men as instruments of pleasure, they preach abstention. They have not yet realised that sexual freedom will give them equality in a possible and eminently desirable form, the equality of those who participate on equal terms in sexual acts undertaken by mutual consent. This lack of understanding leads them to behaviour which, besides being absurd, is most harmful to their own cause. The explanation of course is that the field of contemporary sexual ethics is one vast confusion, so that they cannot understand that their leading interest must be to remain women.

Finally, integral feminism is illogical or unduly ambitious, not in claiming enfranchisement for women (who are now very well able to look after themselves), but in claiming special privileges which are not needed as they were in days when women were in very truth subjugated and oppressed. There should be a reasonable adjustment of the relations between men and women, but legal and social measures should not be pushed to the point of unfairly disadvantaging men. Liberty becomes licence when the liberated take advantage of it to oppress their former masters. Slaves who proclaim themselves free and go on shouting for help show themselves unworthy of a freedom which has been prematurely accorded, and make it plain that subjection (which in the case of women carried with it protection against the male and by the male) must, after all, have been justified and demanded by deep-seated causes which still exist.

Enfranchised woman does not wish to remain, throughout life, parasitic on man. But, as I have already pointed out, average women are by no means inclined to welcome social or legal changes which will interfere with their parasitic role. They would rather be unfree, still able to live as wives, their status being that of women whose exploitation is sanctioned. You will often hear women claim the right to vote, declaring that this will help them to protect the

home and to make war on "immorality". Actually, in some countries where they have gained the suffrage they have passed ferocious laws against women who practice sexual freedom outside the respectable and protective framework of marriage. Feminists of this sort defend their rights against men as the nobles of the old regime used to defend class privileges and exemptions. Marriage, for them, means that they are to have a legally recognised status as men's sexual companions, that they will have no other occupation, need not try to earn their own livelihood, will remain entitled to men's homage. In return they will bear children, rear them, and look after the home. For men this is assuredly a bad bargain, for it would not be difficult to devise social institutions which ensured the reproduction of the species without imposing on men the bondage of lifelong wedlock to the mother of his children and the manager of his home. Most of the women who demand their "rights" are haunted by the fear of the spread of "immorality", which they regard as a personal injury.

It is extremely illogical for women who have fought for freedom to complain that men no longer pay them polite attentions as of yore, and have ceased to be "respectful". They insist on being treated as equals, and complain when they are thus treated. Also, while demanding exceptional privileges before the law, they want to go on exploiting man's amorous weakness. In the Edith Bachelor breach of promise case (November 1929), when the plaintiff was awarded £100 damages, the judge aptly remarked that such suits, which are common in Anglo-Saxon lands, are really an affirmation of woman's inferiority. "Woman", he said, "gives herself out to be the weaker party. These laws were put on the statute book at a time when, economically, she was a slave. Now she demands economic freedom. If the court could see what goes on in the matrimonial market, it would often become plain that the woman has the best of the bargain."

I now come to the question of men's respect for women. (The term "respect" is here used in its most general sense. The absurd belief that a man shows his respect for a woman by not proposing sexual intimacy has already been discussed at considerable length, so it need not be reconsidered here). We often hear the contention that man's respect for woman is a criterion of the degree of civilisation. The idea is in flat contradiction with the results of sociological study. It is true that among primitives the position of women was deplorable. But slavery and the subjection of women have persisted on into our own days in many parts of Africa and Asia among societies which must nevertheless be classed as civilised; and women have been kept in a status of social inferiority almost universally until quite recent days. Still, it is customary to say that a nation is civilised and enlightened in proportion as women are accorded a better position. Certainly in this matter we are in a period of transition, and there has obviously been a notable advance since the days when woman was treated as a beast of burden. The nations that have made this advance have shown thereby a better understanding of elementary human rights, have shown themselves better able to respect, not woman alone, but the individual. Such countries are more efficiently policed than countries in an earlier phase of social evolution, and in other matters these countries have undergone a kindred development, so that their general aspect is farther advanced. But if they have shown special respect, special consideration, for women, they have thereby implied a belief that women require differential treatment because they are different from men—weaker, less powerful, in short unequal. Consideration for women is an alms paid to her sex. By the same token we insist upon kindness to animals; and before this became widespread they, too, had among their masters some who stood out from the ranks because of considerate treatment of their dumb slaves. In a word, special respect for women is the mark of a transition

period in which advantage is not to be taken of her as an inferior, but the respect implies that she is in fact regarded as an inferior.

Modern women are not asking for "respect" of the old kind. They demand equality of treatment. So be it, but freedom entails responsibilities as well as rights. Between equals there can exist only the respect which, in particular instances, may be aroused by character or intelligence; there can be no such respect as was shown for women by men who remained substantially convinced of their own superiority. In a slave-holding system, a master may feel benevolently disposed towards his slaves; but when the slaves have been emancipated, ex-slaves and sometime masters are on an equal footing and have reciprocal rights.

Human beings do not learn to respect one another easily, for respect can hamper personal relations. In modern societies it is improper to decree that this or that class or kind of person shall be entitled to demand unconditional respect. We give respect only to particular individuals, after due reflection, when they seem to deserve it. But if the idea of respect for women has been linked to the idea of inferiority, then respect must fall when inferiority of status disappears, there being no further reason for a respect which was accorded only as a tribute to weakness, enslavement, the privations of persons in an inferior social condition.

If our respect is henceforward to be reserved for those to whom it is due on account of a proper fulfilment of their function in the universe, then, so far as women are concerned, we can accord it only to those who are women before all, who do not rebel against being women, do not fight against the obligations and promptings of their sex. To demand respect for women who aspire to a ridiculous continence which they wish to enforce on others as well as themselves, declaring that continence is a good thing in itself—is to extol infirmity and to glorify the abnormal at the cost of the normal. This is a false valuation, quite in



keeping with the many other deplorable consequences of conventional sexual "morality". We see, then, that the idea of "respect" for women is outworn, and that woman must seek other sorts of compensation.

Integral feminism cannot escape the consequences of its illogicality and artificiality. The extreme feminists do not vivify what they touch. They advocate conditions from which they expect wonders; but all they succeed in doing is to put mother and child in a hothouse without renovating the sterile formulas of procreation, and such hygienic measures as they propose do nothing to check the fall in the birth-rate. At a time when the old anti-sexual policy is decaying, they continue to impose a ban upon all manifestations of sexual freedom.

Here in the West the position of women has become critical. The old standards have been destroyed. As the outcome of two thousand years of anti-sexual struggle and propaganda, women are making themselves intolerable to men, and a sex-war has been declared. In their search for unattainable equality, they ostracise sex by pretending that it does not exist, and end by becoming of no interest to men. For every sensible man, the puritan woman is a scarecrow, an object of detestation. May it not happen that, for the man who truly loves woman, a woman lawyer, a woman member of parliament, is like a worm-eaten peach which no one will have on his table. Should such types become common, will not there be an end of sex appeal? Will not there be an end, too, of that veiled superiority of women which is much more real than their social inferiority, since woman's best safeguard was her inborn power of making the most of her sexual advantages? No laws and no social organisation could restore these invaluable goods or replace them by equivalents.

Owing to their servile acceptance of anti-sexual ideas which encourage in western women the notion that men show them "respect" by not making sexual advances, these

women render themselves uninteresting to men. Discouraging sexual approaches, neglecting the essential purpose of woman's existence, they have little commerce with men, who, for their part, ignore such women. The ultra-feminist woman consequently devotes herself to substitute activities owing to which she comes to resemble a man rather than a woman—though she is a poor imitation. Socially, for man, she is a competitor, forfeiting the advantages proper to her sex, and being left with the inconveniences. A woman who tries to play a man's part is as much out of her element as would be a she-cat that should ape a tom. Where (as in America) "gold-diggers" abound, women whose one object in life is to secure a good time by ruthlessly exploiting masculine passion, we find a condition approaching sex-war. This warfare ensues because women fail to realise that the main purpose of their being is to satisfy men's desires, or because they have been blinded to the fact by centuries of anti-sexual crusading. The conflict between the sexes will become incurable unless matters are readjusted under the standard of sexual legitimacy and sexual freedom.

The relations between men and women require extremely delicate adjustment. We have already discussed the facts of woman's intrinsic value, and have shown how quickly she loses this when circumstances or men impose hard physical toil upon her. Experience shows, too, that, with rare exceptions, woman becomes intolerable to man when she neglects her sexual functions and forces her way into other spheres. These considerations lead us to ask whether, in the last analysis, woman's specific function must not always be the sexual act—for reproduction of the species and for enjoyment. Can there be any other occupation as appropriate to woman's nature and to woman's genius, as are these two?

Throughout the animal world, the female exists to attract the male. A woman who refuses to accept this role and to enjoy the advantages which nature attaches to it,

is like a bird which would rather be wingless. Woman is so clearly designed for sexual purposes that all her other activities are subordinate. In every epoch, doubtless, many women have had to work very hard: sometimes at domestic occupations, enforced upon them in a servile status (either slavery without qualification or slavery camouflaged as matrimony); at other times, whether inside or outside the home, when woman has had to toil in order to earn a livelihood in the sweat of her face. But when, as to-day, we see women thrusting themselves into occupations formerly reserved for men, and thus abandoning the field of amorous idleness in which they had a monopoly, we cannot but be stupefied. No doubt modern life with its harsh realities should by now have made us familiar with these avatars. Nevertheless they are, let me repeat, stupefying to any man who understands woman's physiology, constitution, character, and weaknesses; her peculiar psychology, aesthetic specialities, essential moulding for sexual purposes. We cannot but be amazed to see her caring for none of these things, and therewith throwing away the advantages they have always entailed. If, for thousands of years, woman has been content to exist by satisfying man's desires—whether she did so as wife, concubine, or slave—, that is because there has always been a distinctive feminine status with its logical consequences. We have to recognise that this status, fundamentally sexual in its origin and development, was, on the whole, neither displeasing nor disadvantageous to women, who for ages never dreamed of or desired any other. What can women gain by this freedom about which some of them make such a to-do, if, having killed the goose that laid the golden eggs, they pay for their independence by the loss of their privileged status and of the material advantages it brought them? The mistake made by integral feminists is that, consciously or unconsciously, they want to abolish "Phryne's bosom", forgetting that woman's leading quality must be to have a good knowledge of her

trade as woman, of which one of the most important parts is the provision of sexual pleasure for men.

Many women understand this very well, being those who specialise as amorists, taking pride in their art, and pursuing their best interests by the most admirable performance of the sexual act. Such women do not regret their sex, but triumph in it, applying the utmost resources of body and mind to the cultivation of the possibilities of sex, and distributing pleasure with both hands to those who seek them as lovers.

Societies which have cut a considerable figure in the world have unreservedly taken this view of woman and her mission. In the Christian West, however, people have believed themselves able to give women more dignity in another way. Dignity is a fine word, but it is hard to understand how there can be anything undignified in the sexual act when performed by mutual consent. Besides, we know that, if outward seemings are stripped off, woman possesses no more effective freedom under Christianity than elsewhere. Such freedom as is possible is glimpsed by women, successfully claimed by them, and enjoyed, exclusively as a recent development and under systems more or less openly inclined to reject the Christian aegis. Is this because Christianity only accorded "dignity" and "independence" to women so far as they ministered to Christian propaganda in the home and in public life, being careful to go no farther? And do we degrade a woman when we remind her of the supreme importance of her sexual destiny, which is based on physiological facts? Where will she best find happiness?

We may be glad to note that the inhabitants of the Latin countries are far less inclined to kill the goose that lays the golden eggs, for here the feminist forces remind us of an army in which there are no fighting troops, but only generals, colonels, and a band. The vast majority of Frenchwomen seem healthily indifferent to the indefinite postpone-

ment of the great day when their "rights" are to be granted. During the first third of the twentieth century the French Senate has been thoroughly justified in its stubborn refusal to grant votes to women, in view of the plain fact that so few of the destined recipients of this boon show any desire for it. Only among the peoples of Northern Europe has feminism been a sturdy growth. The weapons of Latin women and those of their Teutonic sisters seem to belong to different arsenals. Perhaps the former are less inclined than the latter to throw away substance in the attempt to grasp shadow. It has been well said that the Latin woman has a "moral privilege" far more valuable than the "legal privilege" of others. Listen to the weighty utterance of Gaston Rageot, the sociologist.

"Among women of the West, it is the Frenchwoman who is held most in honour; it is her tradition to reign by grace, wit, dress, and charm. She enjoys the legacy of many centuries of culture and gallantry. Though not a citizen, she has been a queen; and far though youth has gone to-day in the development of comradeship, there remains something distinctive about a Frenchwoman, something romantic and tender. In the French family, the mother has few rights, but discharges all the duties. The upshot is that if you should ask the women of other countries where the code has made so many concessions to the feminists, I wager they would declare themselves ready to renounce what law has granted them if only they could acquire a Frenchwoman's prestige. Custom, more potent than law (since law merely gives formal sanction to what custom has already decreed), having of late conquered for our women both freedom of action and independence of mind, we can readily understand why they are little concerned to struggle for the 'rights' demanded by feminists, since a sure instinct teaches them that they have more to lose than to gain from suffragist legislation. What is a woman with the vote when compared to a queen?"

We must recognise, finally, that the feminists are trying to replace a beneficial system by one that is far less practical. The modern trend is towards specialisation, and the work of our increasingly populous and complicated societies can be best carried on by the division of labour. More and more, the members of the social organism have to be classed in distinct categories. I am not thinking of the castes of Hindustan, nor of the social classes of the West, but of the specialisation increasingly characteristic of modern industry. The division of labour has steadily increased since its importance was pointed out nearly two centuries ago by Adam Smith, as one of the fundamental principles of political economy. Feminism is a flat defiance of this principle. Yet nature herself gives us a lead by arranging for one of the best of all divisions of labour; nature, in the wealth of her experience, has ordained that woman shall bear children, give them suck, engage in household occupations, and be ready by the gift of herself to beautify the lives of men. This specialisation has been perfectly accordant with her talents, adapted to her weaknesses, and conformable to her secret desires. Now the doctrinaires want to turn everything upside down, to disregard a classification which has proved of general advantage, and to foster the growth of faculties which women cannot gracefully fulfil. "*Quos vult perdere*". . . . How often must this thought come to those who, escaping from the disordered environment where defeminised women are asserting their "right" to play men's parts, find wiser women fulfilling their traditional role, joyously engaged in household or sexual occupations, thoroughly satisfied with their feminine nature, issuing no proclamations, making no speeches, shunning travesties. The feminist contempt for the natural division of labour is so utterly wrong-headed, that a sociologist cannot but ask whether feminism—integral feminism with its obsession of pseudo-equality—can be anything more than a passing malady.

Mussolini's eldest daughter, in an interview at Singapore, boldly announced that Fascism is anti-feminist. She was sure that Italian women would be perfectly happy without the vote and without meddling in public affairs. This statement reminds us that there have indeed been many times and places in which feminism was unknown but women were well content and extremely influential. We can certainly agree that political life and political power are not suitable for woman, who has better things to do. Still, one may be permitted to remark that the fascist outlook is a trifle musty, in that the fascists deliberately oppose the emancipation of women, regarding them as inferiors (we have seen that liberation does not necessarily mean equality of status), and turning their backs upon the reforms that are indubitably essential in matters that concern reproduction and other sexual activities—though it is impossible, nowadays, to deal with such urgent affairs by simply shutting one's eyes. In sociology, more than anywhere else, struthism is absurd. Fascism is certainly courageous when it does not hesitate to defy modern feminism, which is a powerful international movement. But the fascists show no initiative or originality in dealing with the sexual problem, and fail to recognise its outstanding importance.

We can imagine any kind of social organism, if we give free rein to fancy as did Plato in *The Republic*, and we can therefore imagine a society in which women (apart from insuperable physiological barriers) do all the things that men do; and if women genuinely desire this uncanny boon, there seems no reason why their wishes should not be gratified. But we can also imagine a society in which woman, taught by observation of the females in other species, will be perfectly content to remain woman through and through: will be satisfied to be primarily man's helpmate and companion, specialised in her functions, exempt from political cares, living to please. If men and women are agreed upon this as a satisfactory division of labour in human affairs,

why kick against the pricks, and why object to woman's remaining the most attractive of all luxuries? Is not this better for her than being elected to parliament? It is assuredly a mistake to suppose that woman can gain by participating in legislation or delivering lectures, and these activities would not make her more powerful, for she would harvest war with all its chances of defeat, and would throw away the advantages of the victory she can unquestionably gain by shrewd diplomacy off-stage. Women who, without being doctrinaires or university graduates, are merely intelligent, will cordially subscribe to this idea.

*Misogyny and Philogyny.*—Suffragists in England and France have often used a specious and intimidating argument against men who deny that women ought to have the vote, accusing them of being misogynists or woman-haters, and thus causing as much alarm as did the general strike fomented by Lysistrata. But the argument is absurd, being beside the point; and we cannot but admire the way in which the men who support women's claim to the suffrage adopt the feminine method of "reasoning" thus inappropriately. As a salient example of arguments which (like the flowers that bloom in the spring) have nothing to do with the case, I will quote the phrase used by Monsieur Jenouvrier in the Senate on June 24, 1932: "Who among us can forget what he owes to his mother?" The newspapers tell us that this apostrophe was received, as the senator doubtless expected, with loud cheers. But why did no one give the sentimentalist a cold douche by remarking: "What you say has no bearing whatever upon the topic we are discussing. Many of us can never forget a mother who, however admirable, was extremely ill-versed in political matters; a mother in whose hands a vote would have been as useless and dangerous as a razor in the hand of a little child."

Such feminist argumentation implies that all human societies down to the dawn of the twentieth century must have been misogynist, for all or almost all of them excluded



women from the work of government, save for those rare cases in which a woman became regent or was queen in her own right. The institution of matriarchy does not invalidate this assertion, for matriarchy signified no more than that descent was traced exclusively through the female line, and did not entail political power for women. Now it would be absurd to regard misogyny as a universal phenomenon, seeing that on all hands and in every age we can trace the influence exerted by women who have unceasingly affected the lives of men, and can discern how highly men have always prized women. The only genuine misogynists on principle were the Early Christians, not excepting the Fathers of the Church, who were continually trying to escape from woman's influence, and heaped curses on her head; who were obsessed by an anti-feminist metaphysic which derived from the asinine fable about the Garden of Eden. To the Early Christians it seemed that woman was an undesirable, not only in the political world, but socially and spiritually as well. They questioned her having a soul, and regarded her sexual attractions with horror.

Except for these energumens, philogyny is universal. But, as we have seen, its solid foundations have been the bodily and mental qualities which best ensure the triumph of women who fully accept their natural role, that of wife, inamorata, and mother—an acceptance which can alone enable her to make the best use of these qualities. A philogynist is one who loves a woman because she is a woman, and not a freak whom training can transform into a moderately good doctor or lawyer. Success in these fields, or the capacity for such success, will suffice to warn off a lover. As Sinclair Lewis says, "to love women means to love that they should be women, and not second-rate imitations of men". The best defenders of women's outstanding position are those among them who refuse to step down from their sexual throne in order to make a noise in the world as

electors or members of parliament. They defend femininity, which feminism kills. Perhaps the day will come when women, being better informed as to their true interests, will give short shrift to the bad shepherds who by sacrificing them pander to the itch of vanity.

I have already explained that the system which is supposed to keep women in an inferior status is not really characterised by all the drawbacks which are loudly trumpeted in order to show, by comparison, how much better things are managed in the West. What we have to ask is whether, in the East, men really look down on women in a way that is utterly intolerable. Close scrutiny shows that this is not the case. Paul Bourget tells us, in *Outre-Mer*, that if Orientals have kept women in a position of inferiority, "it is because they have loved them with a violent sensuality which we cannot rival". So jealous a watch is only kept over things which are very highly valued. No one knows the intrinsic value of a woman better than an Oriental; and we are not entitled to declare that the factors of this valuation are purely physical, without regard for women's psychical, moral, intellectual peculiarities. The fact that these latter are greatly esteemed is a striking tribute to women, which is enhanced, not diminished, by the barred windows of the harem. In confirmation we may note that woman's influence, her real not her apparent influence, the influence which makes man her humble servitor whatever social arrangements may seem to imply, is a writ that runs in the East as well as in the West. Though nominally she may be a slave, the Oriental woman is often, in fact, sovereign—and it is substance which counts, not seeming.

Some readers will insist that we show contempt for women if we wish their main activities to be physiological or erotic. This is a grave mistake. We do not show contempt for a person by trying to understand him (or her) and helping him to understand himself. Those who employ this formula

—which comes, like so many utterances of the kind, from a tainted source—are such as, at bottom, heartily detest sexuality. They are enemies of the rationalist doctrine of legitimacy and freedom, timid acceptors of the notion of sin, who have never been able to break away from ancient taboos and are outraged by the invitation to discard them. We rationalists declare that no one can have more respect for woman in general, or for any specific partner, than have those whom experience, the senses, and the intellect have convinced how prominent and decisive a part in the great human adventure is played by woman's sex, the beneficent mysteries it discloses, and the supreme consolation it can bring.

## CHAPTER VIII

### PSYCHO-PHYSIOLOGY OF THE EROTIC LIFE

Affection.—Jealousy.—Change of Partners and Sexual Desire.  
—The Spirit of Adventure, and Especially of Amorous Adventure.

*Affection.*—Affection can be more readily felt than described. The term is an exceedingly general one, being applicable to moods and states as different as the tender emotion, friendship, and specialised or individualised love. It seems to me that “attachment” might be a better word, this signifying a relation easily understood, and almost material in character, between the subject and the object, connecting them by a tie characteristic of their particular state, which may be any one of numerous affective varieties.

Before going on to study the part played by affection in sexual relations, it is necessary to grasp the fact that the bounds of affection are far more comprehensive than those of sex feeling, and that the former can exist independently of the latter. No doubt since the rise of the Freudian school of psychology it has become necessary to admit that sex may play a notable part in the sentiments that arise between parents and children. But the same remark hardly applies to the relations between friends, fellow-workers, protegees and patrons. Be it noted, moreover, that affection is not necessarily a sublime sentiment, in the sense in which the term sublime is used by moralists. Affection may be extended to persons who, according to a traditional moralist, do not deserve it; and withheld from those who, by the same standard, do deserve it. Some lavish upon the lower animals all the affection of which their nature is capable; and others, even, are desperately fond of inanimate objects. Many a

collector is far more attached to his books, his curios, or his postage-stamps, than to any living creature. Were he frank he would admit that the loss of these, or their destruction, would mean much more to him than the death of his "nearest and dearest", and would make a much bigger void in his life. Affection, therefore, is in most cases, thoroughly selfish. One loves for one's own sake, for the satisfaction it brings to oneself. That is why it has become proverbial to say that one loves those on whom one has showered benefits; they have become embodiments of the joys one has experienced in doing so. The emotions are complex, but substantially this means that philanthropy is far less disinterested than is usually supposed, and that here, at any rate, "virtue is its own reward".

We can, then, study sexuality while ignoring affection, and conversely; and their mutual independence reduces the importance of instances in which they are conjoined. The union of the two is accidental and episodic, not necessary. We may even see husband and wife regain affection for one another when no longer constrained to sexual approaches which have become sensually repugnant. Nor must affection be confounded with habit, which often masquerades as affection and is apt to replace it in a puzzling way. Thus husband and wife may believe that they are very fond of one another, and only be taught by an enforced separation that they were held captive by the bonds of custom.

Affection is usually supposed to play a leading part in specialised love. I analysed this conception in the eleventh chapter of *Sex Life and Sex Ethics*. Specialised love being desire pushed to an extreme, the exaltation certainly carries with it the whole gamut of the psychical phenomena of affection. Often they disappear when desire dies down, this signifying the end of specialised love. Its original intensity, the qualities with which it is decked, and its supposed everlastingness make its passing more of an earthquake than

the decline of "lesser loves", and even disinterested affection does not survive the disaster. It is the victim of its own intensity and of the vastness of its demands, since in specialised love people want all or nothing. But where it has been less enthusiastic and less exacting, where it has not been so uncompromising in its claims, affection may persist after the death of specialised love, which is replaced by a friendship grounded upon the sharing of happy memories and a feeling of mutual consideration. But of this few persons are capable.

Affection is not a necessary element of unspecialised sexual desire or sexual enjoyment. Still, when desire is strong and pleasure intense, and when both are wisely turned to account, they can easily produce the illusion of attachment between occasional partners, especially if neither of them is prone to the hostility and remorse with which the doctrine of sin tends to poison sex relations. When a man keenly desires a woman, and the woman responds with equal passion, even though their relations are casual there may readily arise between them an affective state which assumes the aspect of specialised love. This depends (as I showed in my earlier analysis) upon the love which the members of this sexual élite feel for Woman (or for Man, as the case may be). Each fleeting partner benefits by the generalised affection for his or her sex. There is superadded gratitude for the appeasement of desire, the charm of novelty, the pleasure of intimate communion, and delight in reciprocal amiability. But here the affection is no more specialised than the love itself, and does not outlast the casual encounter. Still, in the members of this sexual élite who are profoundly cognizant of the legitimacy of sexual acts these casual partners are henceforward placed in a peculiar category, that of persons one has "known" (in the biblical sense), quite distinct from the innumerable unknown. They are one's sexual clients (as the Romans understood the word client) united by the freemasonry of shared sexual pleasure

which replaces other intimate ties—as the existence of a common totem did for the members of an ancient clan.

Since affection can be superadded to sexual pleasure, and may intensify it, we must not under-rate its importance. All the same, it does not change the nature of the relations between the sexes, and leaves specialised love no less fragile than it was before. As regards casual encounters, it embellishes them but does not fundamentally change them. The truth is that in the sexual domain affection has the same importance as friendship and other non-sexual feelings—no more and no less. If we recognise this we shall be able to avoid complicating the problems of sex by introducing sentimental considerations which tend to interfere with a rational judgment.

*Jealousy.*—Every psychologist who knows his business could write a lengthy treatise on jealousy. Here I propose merely to examine how far this strange, unavoidable, and dangerous feeling can throw light on the problems of sexual ethics.

As I have had occasion to point out before, the scantiness of our psychological terminology often leads us astray. The man who kills his wife because she has given herself to a lover is said to be jealous; so is the painter, the scientist, or the man of letters who is mortified because some prize or distinction he covets has been awarded to a rival. I need hardly say that the psychical mechanism in the respective cases is fundamentally different. Jealousy is confounded with envy. Envy is the appropriate term to use when anyone is excluded from a privileged position which has been allotted to another. It devastates the minds of the base who, lacking the ability of those they envy, and without even trying to equal them, would like to drag others down from a high estate into their own mediocrity and poverty. The notion of equality, which belongs to the realm of man and not to that of unaltered nature, is in most cases the mask worn by envy. In revolutions those who flaunt this banner try to degrade their superiors to the ranks, instead

of themselves trying to gain a commission. It is in the name of equality that envy demands prohibitive or spoliative legislation affecting the fortunes of the well-to-do. Under the same device, when war is raging, envy wants to sacrifice the intelligent élite (which is an irreplaceable reserve of national wealth) on the same footing as the innumerable mutts and morons. In such troublous times, envy, wearing the domino of equality, wants to comb out those who are supposed to be evading the common lot, to be escaping the hardships and perils of the trenches or the privations of non-combatants. During the Great War we had plenty of opportunities of watching the envious moving to the attack upon the selfish—a characteristically human spectacle. The envious man is one who wishes to deny to others the goods which he himself lacks, and it is inaccurate, therefore, to speak of “jealousy” when we should say “envy”.

Jealousy is a passion of a very different kind, and its most typical form is sexual.

Let us note, first, that jealousy is common to man and many other animals. Higher mammals, such as the dog or the cat, show both jealousy and envy, the distinction being clear. Where there are two house-dogs, one will envy the other a succulent bone, and will be jealous when the beloved master bestows caresses elsewhere. In such a case, the jealous dog will thrust itself forward and try to push the preferred animal out of the way. I have seen a cat do this, and threaten a favourite lapdog with its claws. Thus jealousy is primitive and natural.

Let us consider the roots of this passion. It is fundamentally selfish. One who is jealous is exclusive, like the dog in the manger. In specialised love, the jealous lover thinks more of himself (or herself) than of the beloved, continually asking “Do you love Blank?” instead of being satisfied to ask “Do you love me?” This way of stating the question shows his essential preoccupations. What he is interested in is not so much that which may be given him as that



which may be withheld—a theft of his own rightful property. Thus jealousy derives from the sense of ownership. The jealous man or woman clings to the partner and warns others off, in the same spirit as that which induces a dog to bury a bone or the jinnee in the *Arabian Nights* to keep the lady locked up in a glass case.

The jealous man cares nothing about the wishes or the pleasure of the woman he professes to love. He would rather see her unhappy with him than happy with another. Let her lead a penurious, sordid, precarious, and toilsome existence under his “care”, in preference to a far more agreeable one with another. A rancorous owner, hard-fisted and suspicious, he baits her unceasingly. What he cannot understand is that the mark of true love is to prefer the enjoyment of the beloved to one’s own. There have been magnanimous lovers who, when convinced of their partner’s preference for someone else, have made the great renunciation, saying: “Love one another. I cannot find happiness in your suffering, but only in knowing that you are happy.” One who is jealous jeers at such a sacrifice. He thrusts himself on the person he professes to love, regardless of signs that his attentions are unwelcome. Therewith he enforces unhappiness. This matters nothing to him if he sees a chance of ensuring his own happiness (though here he deceives himself). If love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave, for the selfishness of the jealous man convinces him that the annihilation of the beloved is preferable to seeing or fancying her in another’s arms. Better that she should perish than enjoy herself with anyone else. Jealousy is thus the direct outcome of selfishness, both in man and in the lower animals.

The height of irrationality and the climax of egoism is attained by those jealous lovers who, while regarding their own infidelity as a bagatelle, see red when they are given a dose of their own medicine. The ancient proprietary instinct here runs riot, and the possessive male regards it

as theft that another should take "his" woman, though he himself claims the right to trespass upon others' pastures. These sexual aberrations, much more than the varieties of the sexual impulse to which this name is commonly given, should be recognised for what they are—dangerous mental disorders.

Obviously, then, jealousy is partly inspired by fear, a blind, frenzied, unreasonable fear of losing one's property, the "beloved" object. Like any other form of panic, it disorders the judgment, leading to hasty, impulsive, and ill-considered actions. Instead of examining facts, it distorts them, and often begins to fight phantasms. Both these affective states, jealousy and fear, have strange kindred, one of them being baseness; but when base deeds are performed because of jealousy or fear, by general agreement extenuating circumstances can be pleaded on the ground that one driven mad by passion can no longer be held accountable. But whereas fear is considered despicable, we find that, in accordance with the dominant sexual code, jealousy (even unfounded jealousy) is deemed a noble passion, and the law is apt to take a lenient view of crimes committed under its promptings—murder of an unfaithful wife, for instance.

Manifestations of jealousy are in most cases grotesque, its preposterous selfishness leading to behaviour so childish that the onlooker cannot but laugh. Especially when confined to the physical domain, it becomes utterly ridiculous. For what do the torments of the jealous husband or lover amount to, in plain terms, other than the question, if it were voiced in words: "Have you allowed anyone but me, your owner, to see, touch, make use of your sexual organs? This would be so atrocious, so intolerable, that the mere thought of it makes my gorge rise." Again, "if only she be not unfaithful" means, "if only she does not do with another the sexual act she has done with me". As Spinoza justly remarks, these torments are usually occasioned by a vivid

and detailed imagination of the loved one enjoying the bodily transports of love with another than oneself. Those who have accepted the doctrine of legitimacy, and therefore hold that none of the organs of the human body can become the private property of another, regard such states of mind as verging on insanity.

The deplorable fact is that sexual jealousy makes persons affected by it dangerous as well as unhappy, and may therefore give rise to terrible conflicts. We are still within the limits of the farcical when Alfred de Musset falls sick because he has seen George Sand and Pagello drinking out of the same cup. But we have passed from farce to tragedy when jealousy leads to torture or to murder. How will it be possible, until we have put an end to the sense of proprietorship and the instinctive tyranny upon which jealousy is based, to make of sexual enjoyment the unfettered reciprocal pleasure which it must be if it is to embellish and enrich human life instead of impoverishing it and darkening it? Jealousy prevents the carefree exchange of sexual delight which is an essential part of truly civilised ethics. That is why I am devoting a special section to its discussion.

Consider this clipping from a Geneva newspaper. "Madame P—, a very beautiful young woman, married a wealthy manufacturer a year ago. She has deliberately scarred her face by the use of vitriol. This horrible act was done, she said, 'for the sake of happiness'. Her husband, being of an extremely jealous disposition, was perpetually accusing her of setting her cap at men. She disfigured herself to prove her love for her husband and assuage his jealousy. These facts were disclosed in the course of the prosecution of Monsieur P— for cruelty to his wife, the charge being brought by his mother-in-law. Rebutting the accusation, Madame P— said: 'I could not prevent men admiring my good looks, and complimenting me upon them. Now they will cease to pay court to me, and I shall be happy.'"

Jealousy, then, is a distortion of the idea of ownership, which has here assumed an exaggerated and atrociously selfish form. Alexandre Dumas the elder, writing to Mélanie Waldor, compares the torments of jealousy to a hell in which "a man continually watches his best-beloved in another man's arms", and adds: "An accursed state, which can easily lead to crime."

Such a fantasy, indeed, violently stimulates the proprietary instinct to react in ways which are commonly (though falsely) considered justifiable. Thus one is supposed to be entitled to kill under the pretext that one loves.

These considerations throw a good deal of light on the problem. We can understand, for instance, why jealousy is not necessarily associated with intense and highly specialised love. La Bruyère long ago pointed out that jealousy does not always indicate a "grand passion". A husband who has ceased to love his wife and seeks sexual pleasure elsewhere will nevertheless become rabidly jealous when she takes a lover, and may go so far as to slay the "guilty pair". On the other hand, a husband whose passion for his wife has cooled, may experience a revival of affection for her when he suspects that she is seeking consolation elsewhere. This form of the "triangle" has been the theme of countless novels and plays. Such behaviour is another embodiment of the proprietary instinct, just as a dog which has dropped a bone as having no further value will become enraged if he sees that another dog has designs upon it.

Since sexual jealousy is the outcome of the proprietary instinct, we are not surprised to find how closely akin to it is the jealousy which often disfigures the relations between parents and children. A like selfishness is at work here, the same "dog in the manger" spirit. Parents sometimes block their children's chances of making a brilliant marriage, being moved by an egoistic desire to keep them at home though in comparatively penurious circumstances. Sigmund Freud and other psycho-analysts tell us about fits of jealousy

experienced by little children who have "fallen in love" with the mother. This exaggerated "family affection" is, like sexual jealousy, based upon the proprietary instinct, upon a perverted and exclusive conception of ownership in the mind of one far more concerned with getting than with giving. "How pitiful it is", writes La Rochefoucauld, "that in conferring benefits one should think so much about the pleasure one experiences in being generous, patronising, protective, that in trying to give a little joy to another one should mainly seek the far greater pleasure of conferring it."

The specific jealousy of *souteneurs* shows to how large an extent jealousy depends upon conventional interpretations of proprietary rights. A *souteneur* is quite unconcerned about the casual relations of his "woman" with the customers she picks up, for these are a mere matter of business; but he is furiously jealous, sometimes murderously so, when she shows any taste or preference for a man, and particularly for a man of his own class. Among certain peoples a husband will offer his wife to a friend or a traveller, but would kill her if she strayed without authorisation. Here we have a similar case to that of the *souteneur*. The male proprietor intends to do what he likes with his own; for it is his own to destroy or his own to lend as he may prefer. His proprietary rights, far from being infringed by such a loan, are emphasised. Conversely, in lands where polygamy prevails, we find no trace of the supposed physiological jealousy in the wives who take trouble to provide their husbands with secondary mates. It would seem strange, even monstrous, to a polygamist's wife that she should claim proprietary rights in her husband, though she fully recognises his ownership of herself. That this ownership should be multiple, that her husband should have other wives besides herself, does not trouble her for a moment. Only in countries where women claim proprietary rights over men on the same terms as men's rights over women, does there arise this jealousy which is actually extolled as a

virtue though it causes so much trouble and is wholly due to false valuations.

We can understand, now, why "betrayal" (the conventional term in the West for a wife's adultery) is one of the chief causes of jealous mania, because it is regarded by the "betrayed" male as a deliberate and unbearable infringement of his proprietary rights. His self-love—which must not be confounded with love unqualified—is wounded by this far more than by the mere physical fact of his wife's surrender to another man's embraces. If the social conditions which now enforce secrecy upon the unfaithful wife were to be removed, if everything were to be above board, if husband and wife were to grant one another sexual freedom, jealousy would no longer exist. That is what happens in the case of married couples who have ceased to demand of one another the fidelity which is only a euphemism for the proprietary instinct. When pushed to an extreme, on the other hand, the itch for ownership may be intensified by retrospective jealousy, each partner being mortified by the thought that "his wife" or "her husband", his or her property, has in the past irrevocably belonged to someone else. It is not the mere fact of physical possession by another which arouses jealousy, but the lese-property involved in such possession.

That is why a western psychologist writes concerning the sexual system of his country: "Where marriage is an institution for decent women, there can be absolutely no question of sharing" (Paul Hervieu). The first thing we have to ask is, does the author mean active sharing or passive? Is the decent woman to be inexorable in her refusal to share her husband with other women, or in her refusal to make her husband share her with other men? The latter, obviously, if she has entered into a contract of which her faithfulness is one of the clauses, since it is "indecent" or "dishonest" to break a contract. But in polygamous societies it is absurd to expect a woman to refuse to share her hus-

band with other women. We have seen that in such societies, far from attaching any importance to fidelity on her husband's part, a "decent" wife is ready at any time to help him to another. It is plain that the standards of "decency" vary with time and place. This shows us that we must be cautious about associating with sexual acts such moral notions as decency or fidelity; and the reason why we have made such a mess of our sexual life here in the West is that many of us, atavistic in our religious outlook, cling so obstinately to such an association. Let us recall how, in societies where a husband is willing to lend his wife to another, the question of cuckoldry and cuckolds can never arise, though it has been the main theme of classical comedy—penned, one might think, in the commercial room of a provincial hotel.

So utterly disordered are our moral valuations in these matters that, among the members of our semi-barbarous societies, jealousy is actually deemed a virtue. In marriage or specialised possession it is regarded as a natural feeling, and is protected by law. Murder for jealousy is almost a licensed form of crime. We may hear a woman tell her lover that he cannot be really fond of her since he is not jealous. She reproaches him, in fact, because he does not regard her as his property, and she implies that she regards him as hers. When the moral code is so indulgent to cruelty, can we be surprised that our values are disordered, that we see the "right of misuse" extended from owners of animals to owners of human beings in virtue of the unrestricted privilege of destroying your own property? "A man may do what he likes with his own."

Jealousy has received most scandalous encouragement from social morality. The sanction which the jealous consider themselves entitled to inflict—murder, in plain terms—is excused by the most pacifically-minded persons, and contemporary law gives it the indulgence of extenuating circumstances. Almost everywhere the stupid form of homi-

cide known as the duel has been abandoned, and our legislatures now bluntly stigmatise it as murder. But sexual prejudices, and the old idea that sexual pleasure as an act jointly participated in by a man and a woman gives the former proprietary rights over the latter, are still so strong that many continue to hold that jealousy justifies a man in killing a woman whom he has possessed and who no longer reserves herself exclusively for him. Some even declare that such killing becomes a point of honour. But to those who have adopted the principle of sexual legitimacy such a contention seems as absurd as it would be to maintain that it would be right for you to slay a man because, having fed at the same board as yourself for a time, he now prefers to get his meals elsewhere.

J. G. Frazer writes (*Totemism and Exogamy*, vol. iv, pp. 88-89): "It is probably no mere accident that two of the most pacific races of the world, the Eskimo of the Arctic regions and the Todas of Southern India, neither of whom are known to have engaged in war, should at the same time be also two of the most immoral races on record, as we count immorality in sexual matters. The reason is simple. Both these tribes appear to be almost free from that passion of sexual jealousy which has always been one of the most fruitful causes of dissension and quarrelling, of secret murder and open war among mankind. While we gratefully acknowledge the domestic happiness of which the love of the sexes is a principal source, we must not blind ourselves to the heavy price of sorrow, tears, and blood by which that domestic happiness has been bought."

Jealousy, then, is one of the most characteristic blemishes of specialised or individualised love. The mechanistic theory of sexuality, on the other hand, undermines the foundations of jealousy, for those who hold this theory believe that there is no irreplaceable partner, whether male or female. Do not weep the loss of one, when there are a thousand others just as good. The groans of a forsaken lover or mistress make



us think of a fool who, having dropped a cherry he was about to eat, bursts into tears, forgetting that there are myriads more in the same orchard.

Jealousy has much less chance of making headway in the mind of one firmly convinced of the soundness of the principles of legitimacy and sexual freedom. No doubt the influences of atavism are still strong, and he lives amid a forest of prejudices each of which urges upon him the hateful and selfish feeling of jealousy. Perhaps he may not be altogether immune. Even so, he will suffer less than most. Reason will come to his aid, telling him how to bear the present, and giving him good counsel for the escape from atavism in the future. He will have a much better chance of making good use of his intellect and his will, even though specialisation, the proprietary spirit, and false self-love have joined forces against him, for he knows their strategy and the limits of their strength.

The rationalist principles we are considering can cope with the worst manifestations of jealousy because no rationalist will ever admit that the sexual act can confer proprietary rights over the person with whom it is performed. Since after it, as before, each individual has the right of self-determination, no claim can have been established. Under a regime of sexual freedom everyone will delight to think that his partner, being lovable and desirable, will make himself or herself loved and desired by many others, thus multiplying and diversifying pleasure. One will be glad to help one's partner find this pleasure and confer it upon others. In those who have reached such a frame of mind, the search for sexual pleasure will not induce egoism; they will be generous to all the world; will be entranced to know that what they have enjoyed to-day, others will enjoy to-morrow. There can be little doubt that sexual freedom is the best preventive and cure of jealousy. Thanks to it, this accursed jealousy, which brings so many other curses in its train, instead of being encouraged and even glorified, will

come to be regarded as a peculiarly stupid kind of sadism, and in a pro-sexual society will be banned and proscribed.

Will it be easy to reach this goal? By no means. Our present education in sexual matters fits us so little to cope with the onslaughts of jealousy that even the wisest of us, those whose reason emphatically condemns it, may find themselves unequipped with adequate defensive armour. They know their own weakness. In itself the infidelity of their partner may seem a trifle, but they dread their liability to succumb to the promptings of atavism and tradition. Still, they will ignore these promptings as long as they can. Judge Lindsey tells us of women who said to him: "If George goes with other women, I don't want to interfere. I simply want him to keep it to himself and not let me know it. I'm afraid it would make me ill." In one case, jealousy caused severe physical shock, in spite of the subject's best wishes. "Every time she saw the other woman she would vomit, and become violently ill. She had nothing against the other woman so far as she knew. The thing simply happened, independently of her wish or conscious volition." (*The Companionate Marriage*, p. 39.)

We see that jealousy is so primary a passion, and one which atavism would have us believe to be a virtue, that some, by inherited tendency, find it almost impossible to resist. Their reason condemns it as absurd, and they determine to abide by their most enlightened dictates. They strive heartily—and they fail. Their unconscious, fed by jealous imagery, works against their better self. Abandoning the struggle, they yield, they see red, and they kill. Onlookers are amazed, for the culprits seemed tolerant, resigned, indifferent to the "betrayal". One can only suppose that, for many, atavism is too strong, so that they are unable, through their own powers, to escape being mastered by jealousy. Their whole environment—example, literature, tradition, the theatre—preaches that murderous jealousy is rightful, nay a duty. Love is looked upon as a sort of

duplex egoism, of which jealousy is an intimate constituent. Tyranny and exclusivism are other factors, and help to poison the whole.

We must infer that reason, unaided, is not strong enough to gain the victory over jealousy. It can show how stupid, how detestable, how unwarranted jealousy is, in a way which will carry intellectual conviction to all save the ultra-stupid. But practice does not follow precept. We have to find practical expedients for overcoming jealousy when, having been easily routed by theory, it returns undaunted to the charge. What is the use of theory, if the malady continues notwithstanding?

We must not be too sanguine. Many, even among those who have whole-heartedly adopted the rationalist and mechanistic view of sex, will succumb to jealousy when their turn comes. Our doctrine is not a cure-all. Still, as it spreads, and establishes a better atavism, the worst forms of jealousy will become rare and out-of-date. There are, perhaps, certain ways of cutting at the roots of jealousy. The adepts of the new theories of sex will in time be more able than we are to apply them successfully. They will realise that it is really of very little importance who is the specific object of sexual pleasure, for the multiplicity of their contacts will have made this clear to them, and it will be a safeguard against jealousy. Indeed, the prospect of deliverance from so evil a passion will help to promote our deliverance from specialised love. But as regards details I shall content myself here with referring the reader to the chapter on "Sexual Comradeship" in a later volume of this series, which will be entitled *A Rational Sexual Policy*.

*Change of Partners and Sexual Desire.*—Some find change essential to happiness. Some prefer that there should be no change. Among the latter, perhaps, if trustworthy statistics were obtainable, we should find a good many who make the best of what they have, being unable to get what they would like. However that may be, it is enough to study

human nature. This enables us to declare with confidence that to most people change seems better than monotony; and that some cannot find pleasure in love without change. It is true that we easily acquire habits, which sometimes become so inveterate that the habitué would rather not abandon what is but moderately pleasurable at the cost of trying to grow accustomed to the new. It is said that we can get used to anything, suffering not excepted. But habit is one thing, and the pleasure it can give is another. In some, who are fond of a quiet life, stability itself brings enjoyment, and provides the charm (some would think it a negative charm) of not being jostled by the unforeseen or perturbed by the unaccustomed, which may necessitate rapid decisions or the acceptance of new responsibilities. There are others who find no pleasure in such static conditions; they do not dread activity; stability gives them a sense of monotony and boredom; and they crave for change, which alone is able to awaken their interest. Thus as regards variety, psychological study shows that there are two contrasted types. This applies very markedly in the domain of the sexual life.

We will ignore, for the moment, those who readily form habits which become inveterate—from taste or from necessity. They are of the type which inclines towards specialised love. Let us turn to consider those who, carried away by the torrent of sexual feeling, know no other joy than that of plunging into ever-renewed eddies. Ask them why they are so restless and they will doubtless reply, with Bichat, that happiness depends on inconstancy and that the supreme art of prolonging enjoyment is to vary the cause without cessation. In polygamous societies the institution of the harem with its possibility (for the male) of frequently changing his partner, is based upon this principle.

To possess a woman twice, it has been said, is a repetition; a third time, is a habit. Now whereas for some such a habit means repose and tranquillity, for others it means

satiety. There is the problem in a nutshell. Concerning a man of the latter type we may say, with de Voiture: "As soon as he has tasted a fruit, its taste seems bitter and he wants a new one." In the eleventh chapter of *Sex Life and Sex Ethics*, on pp. 345 and foll., I discussed the question of satiety at considerable length, but the matter is so vital that I shall return to it here, this being the topic of the present section. Through the mere fact of possession, satiety will arise, even when a man has desired a particular woman more than anything else in the world. In some, this occurs very rapidly. There are men who cannot possess a woman more than once, or more than twice or thrice, for the simple physical reason that thenceforward there is impotence as regards this particular woman. Such impotence is especially apt to arise in men of the phallic type, and above all in those who are getting on in years and have presumably had long and varied amorous experience. Physiologically, repetition has led to a change in their sensations with regard to the woman already possessed, and sexual relations with her become exclusively mechanical, devoid of the subsidiary stimuli whereby novelty intensifies vigour. The sexual act with that woman having become a habit, a man will attempt it, but without the enthusiasm and the passion which can alone make of it a thing apart. In conjugal life, it is satiety quite as much as the temperament of those concerned which leads to a reduction in the frequency of acts of intercourse.

Many married women complain that their husbands forsake them without cause. The fact, commonplace but tragical, is that the husband, rendered impotent by satiety, desperate because of his inability to fulfil his "marital duty", has had to seek casual mistresses, with whom he recovers virility. These are doubtless extreme cases. There are numerous grades.

Of course the same thing may, and often does, occur in the wife, but there is a physiological distinction. Her role being passive, she is, in a sense, always ready for the sexual

act, and an unobservant husband may fail to notice that she has lost her earlier inclination for it; whereas in the husband's case satiety will be shown by a loss of capacity for erection, so that intercourse proves impossible. Often enough, when "marital duty" has become an intolerable or impracticable burden, such a husband will prefer abstinence with its unfortunate nervous consequences, or will seek relief in masturbation. In the seventeenth century the Marquis de Langey was able to get his marriage annulled on the ground of his impotence, when he had demonstrated the fact by vain attempts at intercourse in the presence of experts appointed ad hoc. Afterwards, he remarried, and had seven children. This was, of course, a case of specialised impotence, and it led to the abandonment of the futile procedure known as the "test of congress". Such specialised impotence from satiety may ensue (and here is the tragedy of it) without any loss of affection, without any decline in mutual tenderness—so long as the question of coitus does not arise. This is extremely perplexing to the neglected wife, and she is horrified when she discovers that her husband, who shuns her embraces, satisfies his desires effectively enough with other women much less interesting than herself. She fails to understand that there are men for whom change is a necessary spur to sexual activity, far more potent than the merits of any possible wife. Voltaire remarked that a man, though loved by a goddess, would be ready to be unfaithful to her with any chambermaid at an inn.

Judge Lindsey, in *The Companionate Marriage*, points out that there are married couples who, without seeking divorce, without losing all interest in one another, and even while remaining extremely attached to one another, will nevertheless be persistently unfaithful—perhaps one partner only, and in secret; perhaps both, openly, by common consent. In the latter case they have granted one another licence to seek elsewhere the stimulus and the enjoyment which the

nuptial couch has ceased to provide. A well-known novel, J. Kessel's *Belle de Jour*, discusses this theme. Such situations are the expression of a craving for variety, of a polygamous or polyandrous instinct, which imperiously demands novelty and change of partners to relieve the monotony of conjugal life. We learn from R. Verneau that among the Nubians this imperative need for change is frankly recognised as regards women no less than men, a wife being allowed to give herself to a stranger on the third day of every week.

In *Sex Life and Sex Ethics* I stressed the fact that routinism and habit rob the sexual act of most of its charm. We must realise that for a man to have relations with the same woman, or a woman with the same man, throughout life, is as dull and drab as it would be to have nothing to eat but potatoes or roast chicken. There is a vague intuition to this effect even among those who have not thought the matter out. Though not always consciously, most "respectable" married people dimly perceive that there is something wrong with their sexual life, which lacks spice, and might be better arranged.

With regard to "the desire for change characteristic of man", Auguste Forel remarks: "The negroes of Angola exchange wives, saying that they cannot for ever savour the same dish." Neither specialised love nor monogamy can get over this difficulty. Modern psychologists point out that women who are faithful to their husbands and wish these to reciprocate, becoming aware of the effects of satiety, try, as they sagaciously put it, to "renovate themselves" by a new style of hairdressing, a change of frocks, livelier conversation—and thus to revive the passion of a husband (or lover). One may doubt whether such manœuvres are often successful. The inveterate polygamist will find a kitchen-maid of fifteen whom he has never seen before sexually stimulating though the wife who has always been devoted to him leaves him cold. He too may be sincerely attached

to his wife—but as far as passion is concerned, give him the kitchenmaid.

Norman Haire, in *Hymen* (p. 63), summarises the difficulty in the following apt words: "There are many men, and some women, who apparently need more than one person of the opposite sex to make life reasonably happy for them." We may illustrate Haire's remark by saying that we seldom read the biography of a celebrity without finding (if the biographer is outspoken) that his sexual life was changeful and varied, and that this succession of loves was more important to him than his career. Consider the love-life of La Fontaine, who was by no means backward in this respect, and who, at sixty-seven, fell madly in love with Mademoiselle de Beaulieu, a girl of fifteen.

In *The Research Magnificent* (p. 279) H. G. Wells makes a vigorous plea on behalf of sexual variety: "Then why haven't we a classification of temperaments and a moral code for each sort? Why am I ruled by the way of life that is convenient for Rigdon the vegetarian and fits Bowler the saint like a glove? It isn't convenient for me. It fits me like a hair-shirt. Of course there are temperaments, but why can't we formulate them and exercise the elementary charity of recognising that one man's health in these matters is another man's death? Some want love and gratification and some don't. There are people who want children and people who don't want to be bothered with children but are full of vivid desires. There are people whose only happiness is chastity, and women who would rather be courtesans than mothers. Some of us would concentrate upon a single passion or a single idea; others overflow with a miscellaneous—tenderness. Yes,—and you smile! Why spit upon and insult a miscellaneous tenderness, Benham? Why grin at it? Why try every one by the standards that suit oneself? We're savages, Benham, shame-faced savages, still. Shame-faced and persecuting."

The Prince de Ligne wrote: "In love it is only the begin-



nings that charm. I am not surprised that people are always glad to make a fresh start." Who knows not this? Who does not know that one of the sweetest moments in love is that in which the lovers begin to look at one another challengingly, to convey hints of a secret understanding, to fondle one another, thus proceeding, more or less swiftly as race and temperament vary, towards the act of love which will set a seal by the reciprocal revelation of all the mysteries of sex. Was not this the sport which enraptured Stendhal at the Scala in Milan, of whose propitious loggia he wrote so enthusiastically? But when possession has brought the game to a close, will not everyone who loves pleasure for its own sake wish to renew it by a change of partners, for thus alone can he recapture that first fine careless rapture?"

Here is an interesting consideration. When we watch someone eager for change, perpetually in search of new partners in the love act, we discover that it is not so much the culmination of the orgasm which mainly obsesses him in each case, not the imperiously demanded finale. He is in search of far more than that. Coitus, the act of possession, is a comparatively brief affair, a crowning paroxysm, preceded by numerous pleasures which all contribute to sexual enjoyment. The essence of satisfaction is to enter into new relations, inciting an unknown woman to lower her guard, to surrender herself physically and morally, that you may come to "know" her more intimately than does the casual passer-by, to win her, to interest her, that you and she may mean more to one another than do ordinary mortals, forming a league (even in the course of a fugitive possession that will have no morrow) against the indifferent world which goes on as usual. For a few moments, at least, its waves will vainly lash the shores of your unsuspected isle in far-off seas, where you and she are concentrated upon the delight of mutual self-revelation. This change of partners gives the thrill which the traveller feels when, having reached the

top of the pass, he sees a new landscape reveal itself before his fascinated gaze. We may add that for a psychologist, one who is an observer by taste or by training, nothing can rival change for disclosing the multifariousness, the charm, and the mystery of the human soul.

For one woman is not an epitome of women in general. She is an individual. Anatole France tells us: "It is a mistake to expect too much of a woman. We must take her as we find her—and she is exquisite." I have already pointed out that the exquisite, the superlative, can be found in every woman, even the lowliest. Not, however, till we have known many women shall we have garnered sufficient experience to distinguish the varying shades of bodily charm, gesture, plastique, amorous response. This is a matter for the connoisseur, who will be amply recompensed when these subtle nuances become plain to him. That is why he is continually extending his researches. To sample different races whose traditions and civilisation give the women of each a timbre which varies in each case, is an unrivalled source of sexual pleasure such as only great conquerors and great travellers can have known, they being in this respect as privileged as demigods. The "man of one woman" is, as compared with them, only a poor relation. And the more women a man has possessed, the more does he still desire. Henri de Régnier puts into the mouth of Monsieur de Posancy the words: "Am I to blame because nature gave me so strong a taste for women, or because God made them so various in complexion, figure, and perfume that one can possess an infinite number without getting near the end of the possible permutations." I will quote Pierre Wolf on the same subject: "Women differ without end, and each one of them has her special way of loving. Only a fool will say that all women are alike. Such men drive at eighty miles an hour, and have no time to see the view." Women gain by a change of partner no less than men, and often take advantage of the possibility. I am not thinking here of courtesans, but of

those whose social position gives them exceptional facilities—Catherine of Russia, for instance.

The desire for a change of partners does not take the same form in all men. One man will have a passion for girls of a much lower social stratum than his own, and will pick a drab from the gutter in preference to a lady who would not refuse his advances. Another, whose palate is tickled by the exotic, will remain a colonist or an explorer to get better chances of possessing women of alien races. Yet another cares only for extremely young girls, whom he initiates into the pleasures of sex, for he regards a woman of twenty with previous experience as overripe.

There are men and women whose need for variety is so overwhelming, who are so basically polygamous or polyan-drous, that privation of what they want in this respect is as great a martyrdom as enforced abstinence would be to others. They cannot endure such privation without grave risk of neurosis, the very fact of their urgent need for change indicating that they are strongly sexed. To ignore this, and expect them to be content with the stereotyped remedy of monandric marriage and inviolable fidelity, is a derisory proposal which betrays the heinous way in which social conventions disregard physiological facts. Worse still is it to condemn such desires, which are essentially legitimate, because they run counter to certain time-honoured religious prejudices. What we have to do is acknowledge them, give them the freedom of the city, not drive them underground or compel them to assume the mask of hypocrisy. Our social and moral conventions must be made elastic enough to allow everyone to find a place in which his personal needs in this respect can find satisfaction. To discountenance them would re-introduce, into societies organised on a programme of sexual reform, all the troubles, the conflicts, the revolts which characterise our present system of universally enforced monogamy.

The very fact that the desire for a change of partners

exists is, at least, a tacit admission that change is desirable. We have high authority for the statement that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery already in his heart. The husband who admits the desire for change is constructively unfaithful; and he will be apt to practice the mental substitution about which all experienced confessors know; when having intercourse with his wife he will call up the image of the woman he longs to possess.

Judge Lindsey has received the confidence of young girls who told him about extensive polyandric relations. "One of these girls, aged sixteen, had had relations with twenty boys. . . . Nine of them had gone the limit with an average of five boys each." (*The Companionate Marriage*, p. 315.) Again: "Fine types of girls from some of our best homes have confessed to me a dozen or a score of sex experiences with a dozen or a score of boys. Boys make the same confessions." (*Ibid.*, p. 195.)

These admissions relate to no more than an infinitesimal part of the actual infringements of the code, even in a prohibitionist society like our own. What are we to infer? Certainly not that these young people are immoral, since we have accepted the principle of sexual legitimacy. But even those who repudiate that principle will surely have to agree that the facts show sexual desire to be a force so natural and so powerful that they are only wasting time when they try to counteract it with weapons from their antiquated armoury—much as the brothers in one of Erckmann-Chatrian's novels tried to stop the invader's armoured train with antediluvian lances. Also it is time for people to realise that only blindness or almost inconceivable stupidity can account for the failure to turn so insuperable a force to account on behalf of human welfare.

So widespread is the need for a change of partners that in countries hypnotised by religious precepts and the belief that there is something peculiarly commendable about

chastity (the U.S.A. and Scandinavian lands, for instance, which have declared war against courtesans and suppress them as far as possible) facilities for divorce become general. Thus change of partners is rendered possible by legal artifice. So easy is divorce made in some States of the Union that a woman who complies with a few trifling formalities can without losing caste give herself to as many men as did Chaucer's Wife of Bath. Since the cost of these formalities speedily mounts up, and they take a good deal of time while demanding initiative and perseverance, divorce is practically reserved for well-to-do idlers and exceptionally desirable women. Common folk must get on without a change, which is too complicated or expensive for such as they. The hardships of total or partial chastity come as an extra burden upon the underdogs—as if they had not already more than enough to bear. The modern lands which have adopted these circuitous and hypocritical ways of ensuring the possibility of variety in the sexual sphere thus renounce the sexual freedom which has made life sweet in civilisations where enjoyment was never penalised; but, after all, their inhabitants dwell under the cold, grey skies of the north, too far from regions where the sun shines ardently to realise what they lose.

We have seen that there is no warrant for the contention that either men or women really like specialised love, and cannot find full satisfaction in unions which do not look forward to the morrow. That idea has been spread by propaganda designed to support the religious view that marriage is a sacrament entered into once for all, and that no other form of mating than lifelong monogamy is acceptable. The civilisation based upon Judeo-Christian principles discountenances these alternatives to marriage, and would prohibit them if it could. This has led many to believe, in good faith, that specialisation is indispensable to them. Other modes of sexual union are taboo, or made difficult and dangerous. In such circumstances they cannot be agree-

able and abundant. If they were, specialised love would be far less frequent and less durable, for it could not thrive against so many drawbacks and in competition with unions that provide the stimulus of variety. It flourishes only because of hindrances to the latter. We are certainly entitled to declare that polygamy and polyandry are by no means contrary to the nature of the human animal, who enjoys both when he gets the chance. The illusion that they are unnatural arises because in anti-sexual societies the chance is rarely given.

I think that Léon Blum and Judge Lindsey underestimate the strength and persistence of polygamous and polyandrous desires. They do so because they believe that unions based on specialisation tend to suppress the promptings to variety. Scepticism as to that may be allowed. The study of sexual physiology has taught us that, in love, the object is really of trifling importance, and this view is confirmed by the mechanistic theory of sex. Even in the cases most favourable to the opinion of these two sociologists, when the man and the woman who enter into a specialised union have had sufficient experience of change to have grown rather tired of it so that they long for stability, or when the mating really seems perfect both physically and mentally, the sexual appetite may suddenly take the form of an unexpected and fierce desire for variety. In that case the partner supposed to be definitive will incontinently be forsaken, nature affirming her right to the stimulus of novelty.

Thus we cannot unreservedly accept even Léon Blum's formula that "in the normal man or woman monogamy only corresponds to a secondary state of the heart and the senses". He means to imply that amorous desire does not immediately undergo fixation upon a definitive object, never again to vary; but he holds that in due time such a fixation will occur, and believes that to be the propitious moment for marriage. Those who are firmly convinced that there

is a general desire for sexual variety will certainly subscribe to the first part of the last sentence, but they will have doubts about the truth of the second part, for there are many cases in which no such fixation occurs. Similar reserves are necessary as regards Judge Lindsey's view that monogamy is appropriate to man's natural frame of mind. He himself records a very large number of instances to the contrary.

The truth is that in all times and all countries except under the Judeo-Christian dispensation (and the exception has often been more apparent than real) one of the first uses men have made of wealth and other forms of power has been to ensure the possession of numerous women, frequently renewed. That was the origin of the harem in Asia and Africa. When the Incas, a warrior tribe, had established their grip on Peru and reduced the other tribes to a state of servitude more complete than any known elsewhere, they promptly reserved the prettiest women for their own use. Minnaert, in *Les institutions et le droit de l'empire des Incas*, writes (p. 12): "The Indians also declared that the Incas were exempt from the temptations which ordinarily lead to crime, such as the passion for women, jealousy, and covetousness, also the desire for vengeance—for if they wanted beautiful women the law authorised them to take as many as they pleased." This was obviously an easy way to virtue.

Change of partners is facilitated under the Mohammedan regime. At Fez, to-day, "a wealthy man has at least two or three legitimate wives; and a good Musulman takes advantage of the divorce laws to renovate his supply from time to time. Also the ease with which concubines (negresses for the most part) can be secured is a further advantage. Dr. Frank, physician-in-ordinary to the Bey of Tunis, notes how conspicuous is the desire for sexual variety among the Arabs. He attributes this to "a morbid fickleness of the voluptuous functions, or insatiable capriciousness which

urges upon those who have nothing better to do an incessant search for fresh sexual pleasures". This verbiage may be summed up by saying that what Dr. Frank records is but additional proof of man's fundamental polygyny; and the pleasure which a woman finds in relations with a new partner shows that she, on her side, is fundamentally polyandrous. If people were not reluctant to apply to sexual desire the general law which regulates all our other desires, instead of deciding about sex matters *a priori* in accordance with religious and metaphysical dictates, no one would be surprised that man's sexual senses are ever on the look-out for stimuli which have not been blunted by repetition.

If, in so many, permanent possession induces satiety and is apt to water down pleasure till it becomes insipid or is even transformed into its opposite, disgust, can we not infer that this phenomenon, being localised and arising only with reference to a specific person, would disappear with the disappearance of the conditions which produced it? That, in fact, is what happens. Men of this (the more usual) type, having quickly wearied of a possession which has lost its charm, seek other partners, and, for the same reason, replace these before long.

A man who has been able to secure a fresh partner is, by the mere fact of change, replaced amid conditions favourable to the renewal of amorous delights in their proper intensity. The same resurrection occurs as often as there is a change, for satiety does not arise from frequent possession so long as the partner is changed sufficiently often, being a function of the person, not of the act. The essential thing is, not the personality but the novelty of the partner, not perfection but change. The first comer will do, provided she corresponds sufficiently to the type preferred by the man concerned, conforms to the demands of his particular fetishisms—for fair hair, blue eyes, or what not. We weary of everything except pleasure, which persists if only the object of pleasure be changed often enough to pre-



vent the onset of satiety. A new possession with its appeal to our curiosity and our instinct for discovery, is like a new springtime. It rejuvenates and freshens life. Let me remind the reader of what was said above about the therapeutic advantages of change. I must insist that what cures the neuroses of the continent is not specialised love. That merely serves to relieve the crisis for a moment, after which the same difficulties, the same sufferings, the same longings return. Neurosis can only be cured by sexual freedom, by the power to change partners at will, and by the restoration of its true function to the sexual chase—which is general, and not the search for a specialised or a definitive mate.

Note another of the miracles worked by change. A woman or a man who has become indifferent or even burdensome to the present partner, not arousing the faintest stimulus, not evoking desire, incapable of conferring pleasure, can do all these in full measure for a new sexual companion. In the former case, habit has vulgarised everything; in the latter, novelty glorifies. The bored husband would hardly recognise his equally bored wife if he could see her in the arms of a new lover. He himself, if he finds a new mistress, will discover in himself unsuspected sources of virility, enthusiasm, and youth.

So great is the need for change, so marked is the languor that ensues when change is lacking, that monotony, specialised love, a regime of "toujours perdrix", must be regarded as a state of semi-continence. This explains the conjugal neurosis which was described on pp. 220 and foll. of *Sex Life and Sex Ethics*. The keepers of brothels tell us that the majority of their customers are married men. Dr. William J. Robinson refers to this in his paper on *Prostitution* read at the 1929 Sexual Reform Congress (*Proceedings*, p. 284). Obviously a married man suffering from satiety will hesitate a long time before seeking relief in a liaison with a married woman or an unmarried girl. The risks of "scandal" are too great. Besides, that is not what he wants. To cure his

conjugal neurosis, he needs variety, a succession of different women. His polygynous instinct dictates frequent change, and he will seek it in the arms of courtesans, if he has the courage to revolt against the enforced monogamy of modern society.

In many types of civilisation, polygyny frankly prevails. A man may have numerous wives, concubines, slaves; and divorce is easy. How could this be, were not polygamy instinctive? To deny it is to fly in the face of obvious facts. There are many western men indissolubly tied to one wife who dream of the unattainable paradise of harems and houris, geishas and nautch-girls. Giving free rein to their sexual fantasy they catch glimpses, where none can watch, in some quiet corner of their brain, of a dazzling polygamous realm which is a splendid contrast to the grey world where the dominant monogamic system has prisoned them—and which, poor fools, save for these flights of imagination, they humbly accept.

Conversely, change may have such remarkably beneficial effects that these may react upon specialised love when it is dead or dying. The gratifications of sexual variety may make an amiable, pleasant-mannered man, and one who takes a rosy view of life, out of a husband who, suffering in semi-continence from conjugal neurosis, has been disagreeable, moody, peevish, insupportable. This may redound to the advantage of his partner in wedlock. Having satisfied his polygamous instincts he will sometimes return to the domestic hearth and the wife he has neglected, will return full of ardour—it may be to enjoy the piquancy of relations with a woman who is, after all, so different from his companions of one night and can therefore provide fresh stimulus; it may be because his partner has winked at his polygamous vagaries, and he wishes to show her his gratitude.

We have to reverse conventional judgments on such matters. The really natural thing is that men and women should have sexual relations for the appeasement of desire,

and should then turn to other occupations. The unnatural thing is that a man and a woman should sentence themselves to have carnal intercourse only with one another, and have nothing to do with other persons for whom they may feel desire or who may want to sleep with them (as the quaint phrase goes). Human beings, human races, are as varied as the fruits of a huge orchard. Who dreams of never eating more than one kind of fruit, and renouncing all others on principle?

Thus it would appear that the monogamic matrimonial system, unless corrected by open or tacit polygamy, ignores the most elementary rules of sexual physiology and hygiene. That is why those who know best how to reap the advantages of "bachelordom" renounce the bonds of wedlock. That is why they unceasingly declare experience to have shown, beyond dispute, change of partners and novelty to be essential factors of sexual pleasure. Anyone who denies this truth must be an ignoramus or a hypocrite—a fool or a knave. Surely, then, one who supports prohibitionist systems that render a salutary change of partners difficult or impossible, must be proclaimed a traitor to mankind.

Let us now extend our scope, as becomes the champions of legitimacy and freedom.

He who has not plumbed the depths of sexual experience cannot really know or understand life. But a knowledge of sex can only be gained through experience; and the experience is incomplete, deceptive, ludicrously inadequate, so long as it remains strictly monogamic. Existence can only flower as it should, through the mutual interpenetration of the sexes, when there is intense and repeated sexual enjoyment, kept at concert pitch by the fresh joys and additional knowledge gained from a perpetual change of partners.

People differ greatly in type—in physique, behaviour, faculty for enjoyment, etc. Neither a man nor a woman can begin to know the human species without having ful-

filled himself or herself in many ways by intimate relations with the largest possible number of persons of the opposite sex. For the man of sensual type (and to those who have succeeded in ridding themselves of puritan atavisms the word "sensual" does not connote "evil"), no other sport can be so engrossing as that of sex. He knows that not until he has had relations with several hundred women can he approach to an adequate knowledge of the sexual diversity of woman or grasp the full value of the sexual act. A man who has known only one woman, or a woman who has known only one man, is like a person who has read only one book. For those who have lived in the blinkers imposed by monogamy, sexual enjoyment has remained an automatism devoid of surprises or variety.

To give one example of this truth, how else can a man gain so thrilling and encyclopaedic a knowledge of women as by possessing many women of widely divergent races? His acquaintance with their languages may be minimal, but very little will enable him to place himself at their disposal, enjoy their transports, inspire confidence and a sense of security. He who has never possessed any women but those of his own nation, does not know mankind at large, has no wider experience of the world in general than that of one who has never crossed the frontiers of his native land or visited regions where unfamiliar customs prevail. What is the experience of the rustic who has never left the vicinity of his native town or village, when compared with that of the traveller who has crossed the seas to visit Asia or Africa? How restricted a knowledge of womankind is that of the man who has lived only with a sexual mate thinking the same thoughts and speaking the same tongue as himself, as against that of the favoured mortal who has "known" an Arab or a Kabyle woman, a Chinese or a Japanese, a Polynesian or a Malagasy, and, in her arms, has watched the raising of the veil which concealed the mysteries of a civilisation so different from his own. The

same is true of a woman who has been possessed by men of different races.

It is not enough, therefore, to say that in some cases a change of sexual partner is necessary or expedient. We must add that one who, deliberately and from taste, has adopted the principle of such change as a rule of life, one who has freely and passionately sought and accepted enjoyment with mates unceasingly renewed and diversified, will, as his (or her) career draws to a close, be full of compassion for those who, cabined, cribbed, confined within the limits of prohibitionist doctrines, have been deprived of such varied enjoyment, condemned to restriction, penury, destitution. He will have no regrets, and if he could begin life over again he would seek to vary his sexual experiences as much as possible. He has been permeated, exalted, and satisfied by the joy of life. Sexual variety has given him such intense gratification that he makes a cult of it, as contrasted with the starved existence of one who has accepted and endured monogamy, and he declares it to have been the splendour of sunshine when the others have had to content themselves with the poor heat and light of a feeble fire and a stable lantern.

Must not such clear and vivid testimony, must not such reiterated experiences, be taken into account when we are drafting our plans for sexual reorganisation? Will not the doctrine of legitimacy and freedom be the guiding star of sexual reform, since it has shown itself indispensable to the blossoming and happiness of mankind?

*The Spirit of Adventure, and especially of Amorous Adventure.*—Ethnologists, studying migration, declare its causes to have been manifold, whereas earlier historians thought only of the need for escaping from an environment which was, or had grown, inhospitable. "Complicated influences were at work: desire for change, hope for betterment, the spirit of adventure, the lure of the unknown; restlessness played its part, restlessness which, though it entails much incon-

venience, is undoubtedly a spur to progress. What Ratzel spoke of as 'the craving for space' has no significance unless it means the desire for a fuller and freer existence." (Henri Berr, in the preface to *Les races et l'histoire*, p. xii.)

The spirit of adventure has always been one of the prime motive forces of human activity. There have invariably been plenty of persons eager to "live dangerously", for this gives life a zest. Those whose existence is calm and untroubled are apt (even if they do not detest this tranquillity) to play with risks; they gamble, they speculate on the stock exchange, they endanger life and limb in hazardous sports, they venture the unknown perils of travel and exploration. Uniformity becomes intolerable, even to those who profess to like it.

The spirit of adventure may be defined as a craving for escape from the tediously familiar daily round by the search for alluring and stimulating novelties. Its converse is the somewhat pusillanimous wish to avoid leaving the customary environment, to keep things as they are, to enjoy the same sensations day after day at the usual hours; these impulses to resist change are strengthened by dread of that which is unexpected, disconcerting, and likely to necessitate a breach of habit.

This spirit of adventure may take various forms. Even commonplace persons succumb to it at times under the stresses of life; and it would be a mistake to suppose that it animates none but the explorer, the coloniser, the emigrant, the soldier of fortune—who are the modern counterparts of the filibusters, pirates, conquistadors, and condottieri of former days. It is encountered in an anti-social form among the get-rich-quickers and others who wish to lead luxurious lives without having to work hard and regularly; such persons often surprise us by the risks they run when it seems as if a more orderly and less arduous profession might offer them better chances; but they would rather be swell-mobsmen, swindlers great and small, burglars,

smugglers, poachers. All these prefer an adventurous life to a steady one, wooing chance and the unknown. Many adventurers more or less of the same kidney, without infringing the law, seek some other means of escaping the monotony of every-day life: they travel, to find novelty at sea or in the mountains; fly from reality into the theatre or the cinema; hunt or fish, finding relaxation in the unexpected, in the chance of showing exceptional skill and boasting about their exploits; risk their necks as rock-climbers, facing almost inevitable death in such impossible ascents as that of the Eigerwall, in the Bernese Oberland, and involving would-be rescuers in their own destruction; and so on, and so forth. It was the spirit of adventure which discovered America and Polynesia, gave rise to countless "lively and cheerful wars", recruited mercenaries and free companions, instigated crusades, built railways and established steamship lines, made aviators and launched them upon the conquest of the stratosphere, and a few years ago sent to fight and die in the Great War many who enlisted as volunteers. These adventurers make the world, and lawgivers merely interpret it.

The courtesan, whom short-sighted moralists denounce as attracted to her profession because she is an idler in search of an easy life, would undoubtedly be much disappointed if that were her real motive; for (with few exceptions) the conditions imposed in modern times by religious-minded prohibitionists make her life anything but easy or safe. What tempts many into this career and supports them in the hours of adversity is that their occupation remains adventurous, being one in which each dawn brings new possibilities, while each night closes a day of hunting and hope in which skill or chance determines the results—often disappointing but sometimes magnificent.

But how little scope for adventure is left nowadays, on a globe which is continually shrinking and where the known gains unceasingly upon the unknown. MacOrlan writes:

"All the roads leading to adventure, roads which for our predecessors led to terra incognita, have been explored. Western civilisation has choked adventure. What is left for us but the eager pursuit of fame, the desire to gratify vanity, the hunt for titles and decorations, the gaining of money whose only use is to buy cups of flavourless tea which we have to drink in the company of unsexed moralists." A French statesman who had held the highest office in the State gloomily remarked: "Stendhal wrote that if we want to know what a man really is we must watch him in the morning when he sets forth upon the search for happiness. This search is little practised at the Elysée. No doubt that is why so little is known about those who inhabit this palace. Happiness? I have not yet caught sight of its fleeting shadow!" A wearisome social routine which lacks the tang of the unexpected, and is as conventional as the flags and coloured lanterns of a fourteenth of July celebration; the monotony of family life; daily drudgery which is never embellished by the spirit of adventure—these things are deadening for those who would, if they could, enjoy life to the full. The modern town, as compared with that of the Middle Ages, has certainly given us more comfort, cleaner streets and houses, brighter artificial light, an abundance of good drinking water, baths and better sanitation, cheap and speedy transport; sometimes, but by no means always, more security for life and property. But it has expunged the unforeseen, the picturesque, adventure, truculence, the right to use knees and elbows freely—in a word, all that used to give a savour to life, and make it joyful. Would you rather be Babbitt or Casanova?

Maybe the possibilities of celestial adventure sufficed believers who fancied themselves familiar with the Christian Olympus and its inhabitants, and on intimate terms with a God concerning whose history and tastes they had authoritative information. These puerilities may, no doubt, occupy some of a mortal's spare time and energy, but the fact



remains that our terrestrial adventure seems the only one worth considering by those who have no interest in an alleged Beyond. They want to enjoy that adventure, and are prepared to seek it. In what direction are they to look? Must they accept the risks and unpleasantnesses of a life of crime, becoming at the very least a smuggler or a gun-runner before they can hope to enjoy the spice of adventure? Must they flee from the societies which plume themselves on civilisation to seek the unexpected in distant lands where they are likely to find thoroughly moral cinemas, ridiculous clothing which the missionaries have forced upon the unhappy natives, and altars set up in honour of the melancholy gods who have detested adventure ever since the legend of the Fall was "in the news"? Or are they, grown weary of the living, to turn to the graves of the dead, and, in the name of ethnology or archeology, to pry into the mysteries of forgotten ages and risk the wrath of long-deceased monarchs like Tutankhamen? Such opportunities are not open to all. Many, without knowledge or foresight, wait more or less resignedly as day by day they approach the last Adventure of which none tell whether it will open a door or close one.

Where can adventure be found, or at any rate a substitute for it? The northern peoples, in Europe and America, have been taught to seek it in strong drink. The fumes of drink enable them to call up in fancy all that is now denied them: free love, costly travel, exotic dances, life under a southern sun, lotus-eating, voyages in lands where it is always afternoon, exploration and its surprises, tiger-shooting or elephant-hunting, palavers with indigenes who are not yet disguised as western bourgeois, courtesans with bronzed variants of Phryne's bosom. What western civilisation has methodically destroyed, can still be revived by the magic of alcohol. But it is a sad dream, and a sadder awakening to reality. Compare the life of a Casanova, and that of a football champion; the burning, intense sexual emotions

of the women described in the famous *Memoirs*, and the sterile frenzy of the spectators at a cup final. Which side is the pleasure natural, and which side is it artificial; which is genuine, and which spurious? Which is suffused with the vivifying breath of true adventure?

There is one domain, even for the over-regimented victims of civilisation, where adventure can still flourish, still exalt and beautify life. This is the domain of sexuality, that of the eternal struggle and sport of the sexes, with its surprises, stratagems, defeats, triumphs, and joys. The sexual impulse and its gratification are close friends and trusted auxiliaries of adventure. To take loving possession of a new partner, is, by itself, an adventure. To do this many times, with new and ever new bedfellows, is to return to the freedom of ancient days and thus to frustrate the parsimony of modern institutions. To seek enjoyment is to hunt as our ancestors did, sometimes to fight, always to be enraptured; and, whate'er befall, it helps us to escape a destiny in which we are tied by artificial and unreasonable conventions. It ensures the victory of the free being, natural and self-determined, over an artificialised and etiolated existence. Henceforward let them live for amorous adventure, all the men and all the women who have boldly discarded sexual taboos. They will be charged with immorality, but little will they care, for they have raised the standard of freedom.

Moralists of the old school do not understand the psychology of those who, having accepted variety as a basic principle of the sexual life, are continually in search of fresh conquests. They are supposed to be extremely sensual, to have an itch for incessant enjoyment. In some, of course, this trend exists, and may be dominant. But in many of them a very different psychological factor plays the leading role—the love of adventure. Certain persons are able, throughout a long life, to put up with gloom, lack of colour, nullity; they do not seek change, but incline to dread it;

in many cases their tranquillity is due to ignorance, for they have had no experience of variety; they live in a little ant-hill, and have the limited vision of ants, for they can hardly see the nearest hillock, while the distant landscape, the sea, the sky, the stars, and the galaxies are utterly beyond their range. They gain an easy reputation through the regularity and morality of their petty existence—though no one knows what abominations they may perpetrate behind closed doors and shuttered windows. But man is not this homunculus fashioned by oppressive conventions; he is, or has been, utterly different. His original destiny fitted him for struggle in the open air, for strenuous effort, the ardour of research, the risks of the chase and the chances of capture, the bold conquest of nature and of his fellows with force always and with violence at times. Civilised man is stifled in a nightcap and slippers, if there still remains in him any of the yeast of ancestral adventure. Then, at any cost, he has to escape from the environment which crushes him, makes him neurotic, saps his very life. Not everyone is content in a sheltered existence under the protection of a code. Many need adventure, and, since all other adventures have vanished from their world, it is towards amorous adventure that such men direct their hopes and to this pursuit they devote their surplus energy.

The Frenchman, the Italian, the Spaniard, all the Latins, excel at this quest. The German often complicates it by excessive sentimentality. The Anglo-Saxon has no clear conception of it, regarding it either as a sin from which he must cleanse himself, or else as a treacherous path at the end of which he will have to pay matrimonial reparations. The Musulman, whose sexual system is unduly narrow, confines it to the pursuit of pederasts, and to female prostitutes who are the only women given the run of the streets. In the Far East, on the other hand, we find experience and skill that are truly Latin. This adventure is based, of course, on amorous desire, but it always adds the powerful

charm of the unexpected, of hope, of intoxication. It is a gallant hunt, with all the surprises, disappointments, and rewards of the chase. In ancient times it comprised a very large part of life, and it fulfilled an urgent need for the members of both sexes when they were neither of the uterine nor of the orchitic type.

Many French writers have given excellent descriptions of the amorous adventure. Léon Blum writes (*Du mariage*, p. 65): "I was very fond of pursuing women, partly in the spirit of an unconcerned saunterer who waits for chance to give him a goal for his solitary walks, partly in that of a sentimental dreamer on the look-out at every street corner for the adventure which might change for him the whole aspect of life."

Michel Corday, in *Vénus ou les deux risques*, gives a description of the adventurous pursuer of women which is so typical that I will reproduce it here: "Mirat, as his friend Reiset put it, took them all 'on the wing'. In the early days of his liaison with Madame Guerande, he did not see other women on his way through the street. Then, once more, he became aware of their existence. He did not need the sharp eyes of a corsair to detect all these proud frigates which passed him in fine weather, with flags flying. His inclination was to accost them, carry them off piratically, by main force, without knowing them, so much was he impressed by their beauty and their faces. When he went out walking, it was always in the streets and on the pavements where the greatest number of pretty women were to be found; along the rue de Havre, the right side of the rue Auber, the left side of the Boulevard from the Opera to the Madeleine, then into the rue Royale. He ticked off those who seemed to him eminently desirable. So covetous was he that he would rather find few than many, lest he should suffer from regret because it was impossible to have them all. If he overtook a woman with a well-moulded back, he was secretly rejoiced to find her profile unattrac-

tive, 'one less to desire' being his secret thought. All the stories he had read about chance adventures fermented in his brain; women who likewise had a taste for casual intrigues moving swiftly to a conclusion, women who surrender when a moustache brushes their cheek, women who are seeking vengeance upon a husband or a lover; all the lively love-stories which tell, in a page or two, of the passage from a first surprise, through delight, to an easy triumph."

Amorous pleasure, even with a meretrix? "You can sail", says MacOrlan, "from any port for an adventure if it be hidden in the abysses of human thought." (*Nuits aux bouges*, p. 132). When the young men of Fez visit the quarter of Dar Qitoun to watch the Shereef pass by, they say "we are going hunting". (J. J. Tharaud, *Fez ou les bourgeois d'Islam*, p. 125.) In these studies I have made it clear enough that the doctrine of legitimacy insists upon every one's right to self-determination and that force or fraud is equally wrong, so I need hardly point out once more that this "hunt" means nothing more than an adventure in which the adventurer must not grumble if he gets more kicks than halfpence. But, with these reserves, it is easy to understand that, in both sexes, the pursuit of a partner for amorous dalliance has all the excitement of the chase, being no less full of surprises, disappointments, and triumphs. That, of course, explains its unfailing charm. It is certainly the most captivating of sports. We must not cavil at the notion of "adventure" or at the word. "The life of adventure", writes Léon Blum once more, "should precede the life of marriage." Adventure offers the finest chances. Some go so far as to criticise Casanova's *Memoirs*, saying that the Italian adventurer makes a poor showing in respect of the number, the age, the station, and the behaviour of his inamoratas.

However that may be, amorous adventures may begin in every street. One who has the time and skill of the clever Venetian, who has made a science of seduction and an art of sexual enjoyment, has only to seek and he shall find

plenty of caresses. Amorous adventures have enriched existence in every great city both ancient and modern, distributing joy with both hands. Don Juan, says Rémy de Gourmont, was a man who had remarkable luck. But why? Because he was full of the spirit of adventure. "He is no longer the lover, he is the traveller, the saunterer. He is not the slave of one method, but is always ready to grasp the skirts of happy chance. I am thinking of the sudden merging of two desires which hazard has brought into juxtaposition. This is not a choice which enables the necessary act; it is the whole human species whose impulses mingle in two beings with a sort of obscure frenzy. No name, no morrow, but a memory which may become a regret when more civilised encounters occur." The fact is that Don Juan is typical of Atlantic civilisation. He embodies the reaction against its strait-lacedness and its Christian asceticism. That is why he is in the limelight, envied and hated at the same time. In pro-sexual societies, his figure seems unmeaning, incomprehensible. There, adventure and its joys are for everyone without stint. Besides, that of which there may be just complaint in the activities of a Don Juan in western society—the harm he may do to the reputations and the future of his mistresses—falls to the ground when amorous sport can have no such disastrous consequences, because it is forgotten as soon as it is over, and harms no one.

But in our lands the puritan persecutors, growing bolder and bolder, have made a dead set at amorous adventure. It has been driven from the streets. They are reserved for the passage of toilers, dumb, driven cattle on their way to or from the daily task. Hypocrisy is in the saddle, and even among the Latins who are fond of amorous sauntering, it creates leagues with a musty religious flavour to pillory "licence". Every well-dressed and pretty woman is regarded by the anti-sexuals as a danger; every couple, as a scandal; every public caress, as an outrage. They harness the law and incite salacious cits to pry upon or fling stones at the

courtesan who passes with a smile or a laugh, tossing her head. Owing to the cowardly way in which we have struck our flag when challenged by anti-sexual foreigners, owing to the false shame which prevents our denouncing their prudery and reacting against it, the streets of our old Latin cities have become effete copies of those of puritan towns, and adventure, amorous adventure, has gone into hiding at the behest of conceptions which we do not share.

Amorous adventure, the refuge of those who do not wish to be "standardised", is thus menaced alike in town and countryside. There are lands in which it has been entirely suppressed by unceasing espionage and narrow-minded prohibitions. Even in France we are chary of tolerance. We interfere with adventure like mollicoddles, applying regulations which claim to represent decency, hygiene, and good behaviour when they really derive from anti-sexual prejudice, from the morbid impulses of fanatics who like to use high-sounding labels when they indulge their obsessions. With the result that sexuality, which cannot live on the dole, withers in a hostile atmosphere. The pity of it is that the human race, too, will wither and die out, a prey to neuroses, if adventure dies, for our vitality will be cut off at the source. More than health will go, more than balance will go, for we shall have to write "finis" beneath life itself.





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